

Fig. 8.—*Dorycerinus* (species undescribed) with *Platyceras formosum* Keyes attached.

Fig. 9.—Another view of *Platyceras formosum* Keyes from the Kinderhook of Marshall county, Iowa.

Figs. 10 and 11.—*Platyceras latum* Keyes from the Burlington limestone.

Figs. 12 and 13.—*Platyceras obliquum* Keyes from the Burlington limestone.

Figs. 14 and 15.—*Platyceras capax* Keyes from the Burlington limestone.

Figures 1 to 9 are from specimens in the collection of Messrs. Wachs-muth and Springer; figures 10 to 15 from specimens in the collection of the writer.

The Funeral Customs of Ireland.

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SYNOPSIS. I. ANCIENT.

Primitiv Ideas of Spirit World.—Tying the ghost—driving off ghosts—offerings at grave—heaven and hell—purgatory and transmigration—leads to embalming, etc.—modern ideas developd from the old, as shown by archæology and survivals.

Early Races of Ireland.—Fomorians—Firbolgs—Tuatha-de-Dananns—Milesians—the first probably not Aryan.

Ancient Burial Types.—Disjointed burial—extended burial—cremation—mounds, kistvæns and urns—cremation nearly universal—Australian and other parallels of disjointed burial—generally indicates lowest status of savagery—extended burial may be Danish—examples—cremation—New Grange, etc.—urn burial—body sometimes cremated within the tomb—battle of Moytura and burial notices—funeral sacrifices and cannibalism—the round towers, not sepulchral—royal burial and Indian parallel—brain balls as trophies—legend of King Conor MacNessa.

II. MODERN.

Causes of decay of old customs—Omens—the Banshee—fairy influence in sickness and death—instances—feeding abducted persons—fairy changelings—malignant spirits—feathers at death—burying the disease, parallels. PRELIMINARIES—hoarding for the funeral—ceremonies of the dying bed—laying out the corpse—the Máistínid—watching the corpse. THE WAKE—origin and purpose—the gathering—the Caoine or funeral lament—

English specimen—Gaelic Caoine. WAKE GAMES—former dramatic games described by authors—Broigín—Cloif air Bas—Broigín or Haire-haire—Fag'ailt Ceird—Cleas a tsoipín—Ceannac't a G-caora—Sagart a P'arraiste—Dam'sa na G-coinnínid*—Gleus Loinge—marrying games—other games from Carleton. THE FUNERAL—leaving the house—carrying the corpse—beliefs—the lament—curious custom and legend—garlands—circuits about crosses—murder funeral in the north—Fairead'n Team-poll—Kilranelagh churchyard and child burial—churchyard ceremonies and beliefs—digging the grave and legend—family burial and beliefs—Kerry legend—sacred cemeteries—Templeshambo cemetery, for men and women—funeral cures and charms—the murder test—the Feur Gortac*—CARNS OR LEAC'TA—history of a Kerry leac'ta—leac'tas at Cong. THE FUTURE LIFE—transmigration, butterflies, seals—dying in debt—salt and wool—visiting ghosts—hallow eve—meeting a ghost—transmigration of inanimate objects and instances.

As all religions are based upon the belief in a future life, so the funeral customs of a people, as embodying their conception of the nature of this future life and the necessary preparation for entering upon it, furnish the surest index of the character of the popular religion.

In the lower stages of fetichism, where all the ideas of a future life are vague and unformed, no special abiding place is assigned to the disembodied spirit, which is supposed to hover unseen about its accustomed haunts, to the sore annoyance of its former friends among the living. Hence the funeral ceremonies are intended rather to get rid of the troublesome ghost of the deceased than to provide for his comfort in the next world or to perpetuate his memory in this. For this purpose the Fijians and Australians tied the feet of the corpse that the ghost might not be able to rise out of the grave,* other savages returned by a roundabout way from the grave to the village so that the spirit might be unable to find the road back, while still others compelled the widow to bathe in the river immediately after the burial of her husband, in order to "wash off the ghost," or perhaps rather to throw it off the scent. This probably explains also the Indian custom of changing the name upon the death of a near friend† and the universal unwillingness of savages to pronounce the name of the dead, a dislike which some tribes carry to such an extreme as even to discontinue the use of any words which might suggest the unseen presence.

As fetichism took on a higher development the floating ideas of the

*Lorimer Fison, *Fijian Burial Customs*, in *Jour. Anth. Inst.*, x, London, 1881; A. W. Howitt, *On Some Australian Beliefs*, *Jour. Anth. Inst.*, xiii, 190, London, 1884.

† This custom existed among the tribes on Albemarle sound in 1585 (Hariot, in *Hawke Hist.*, N. C., i, 1859), and was found nearly three centuries later among the Chinooks on the Pacific coast (Swan, *Northwest Coast*, 189, New York, 1857).

earlier stages wer combined into a mythologic system in which the spirit world was localized and the future life became a shadowy counterpart of this, with the same passions, pleasures, pursuits and necessities. Accordingly the soul about to set out for the land of the dead must be provided with food during the journey—which among the northern Indian tribes was generally supposed to occupy four days—with weapons of war and the chase, with cups, dishes and other utensils, with dresses, beads and rings for personal adornment, with horses to ride and slaves to do its bidding. A remarkable survival of this idea among the colord people of Washington is exemplified at Graceland cemetery, where the graves of children ar coverd with the toys prized by their owners in life, from dolls and sets of toy dishes down to whips, balls and old oyster cans. The animism of the savage recognized the existence of a spirit in every object about him, from rocks, trees and animals down to the commonest articles of every-day use. He knew that in death, altho the body remaind behind, an invisible enlivening something was gon, and according to his philosophy this *anima* escaped from the mouth with the last breath of the dying man or past out from the gaping wound with his life blood. When the pot was broken, altho the fragments might be joined together again, the clear, musical ring was gon—the *anima* had escaped and the pot was dead. Reasoning from these premises he shattered the bowls, tore the garments and slaughterd the dogs, horses and slaves about the tomb in order that their imprisond spirits might be releasd the more quickly to follow their master to the land of shades.

When a man's importance grew to be directly commensurate with the extent of his possessions in goods, horses or slaves, the same principle was held to apply to the next world, and it became a matter of duty and pride with the survivors to contribute to the dignity of the dead chief by adding to the number of the funeral offerings and swelling the train of victims, until, as in the case of a Dahoman or a Zulu king, we find whole armies butcherd that their shades may accompany the dead tyrant to the spirit land. The duty of the slave became the privilege of the nearest friend of the deceasd, and led the Natches Sun and the Hindu Suttee alike to sacrifice themselves over the corpse of the loved one that their spirits might be united in the other life.

In the primitiv community a man's acts wer good or bad only as they affected the welfare of the tribe at large, and any wrong-doer met swift punishment at the hands of the aggrieved individual or clan. With the development of civilization came the idea of abstract morality or virtue, and the establishment of a code of morals whose infraction might merit punishment not only here but also hereafter. This involvd exclusion from the abode of the happier shades, but as the idea of a hel was of slow growth, the natural result was the doctrin of metempsychosis, the most common form of which belief held that the soul passd a probationary period as the unwilling tenant of the body of some animal—a horse, a dog, a wolf or even a worm—suffering all the animal vicissitudes while

retaining its human and spiritual nature, and transferd from the body of one animal to that of another, by a series of changes varying in number and character according to the degree of punishment merited, until, purified by suffering, it was allowd to return once more to its original human body and enter with it into happiness.

It was an essential point of this doctrin that the body must be preservd from decay, or rather from dissolution into the elements, otherwise the soul, unable to enter again into its earthly tabernacle, would be compeld to return to its animal prison or become a lonely wanderer through all eternity. Hence the pains taken among early nations, by embalming or by the erection of huge funeral mounds, to prevent the destruction of the body or the scattering of its ashes. A similar idea seems to underlie the belief that a failure to perform the customary funeral rites doomd the soul to wander in outer darkness. This belief seems to hav been general among the northern Indians, as evinced by the desperate efforts they invariably made to bring off their dead from the field of battle, by their anxiety to "cover the bones" of their murderd friends, and by the Iroquois custom of driving away the ghost of a tortured prisoner with shouts and hideous noises after the blackend and mutilated corpse had been thrown out from the village to lie unburied in the forest.* It was evidently held also by the ancient Irish, as is shown by some of their old popular tales.

THE EARLY RACES.

As the human mind, under ordinary circumstances, develops by regular stages, so there is a regular sequence in the beliefs and customs which mark this development. The most highly civilized nations of to-day hav risen through all the intermediate grades from savagery, and in studying their national life we shal find lingering remains of customs which can be explaind only through a knowledge of the existing beliefs of more primitive peoples, and if we can pursue the investigation into the domain of archæology we must expect to meet evidences of former practices which ar now relegated to the lowest savages. In treating of the funeral customs of Ireland, a country especially rich in the remains of antiquity, it is necessary to a proper understanding of the subject to go back to the earliest period of which we hav any monuments. It is not, however, practicable within the limits of this paper to enter into a detailed account of particular structures or to institute a comparison with similar works on the continent.

The Irish, like every other historic nation, ar a mixt race, and the native annals, which unquestionably go back to a remote antiquity, recount several invasions or colonizations of the island long before the Christian era. The aborigines of the country, or, more correctly speaking, the earliest colonists, wer known as Fomorians, which, however, was not their true name, but that imposed by their conquerors. They ar said to hav come

* Greenhalgh (1677), in *Doc. Hist.*, New York, i, 16.

originally from Africa. Then we have accounts of successive colonies which made no permanent impression until the landing of the Firbolgs (pronounced *Firbullag*), supposed to have taken place about seven hundred years before Christ. The Firbolgs conquered the country, established a regular form of government and drove the aborigines before them until the remnant took refuge on the islands which skirt the western coast, where they earned the name of Fomorians or Pirates (Gaelic, *Fomoraigh*) by their forays upon the settlements of the invaders upon the mainland. About one hundred and seventy years later another people, the Tuatha-de-Dananns (pronounced *Thua-dhë-Dhan-yawn*), landed upon the eastern coast and demanded a portion of the island. This demand being refused, the invaders advanced rapidly into the interior while the Firbolgs retired before them until the latter, having apparently been joined by the Fomorians, concentrated all their forces on the plain of Moytura, on the southern border of the County Mayo. Here about five hundred and thirty years before Christ, took place the most celebrated battle in the ancient annals of Ireland, the struggle lasting four days and resulting in the total defeat of the Firbolgs and the death of their king. The magnitude of the conflict is attested by the number of sepulchral mounds and monumental pillar stones extending for miles and giving to the plain the appearance of one vast cemetery, as it is in fact the grave of the Firbolg nation. The survivors were allowed to remain in the western province of Connaught and the adjacent islands, where the remnant of the Fomorians still existed. Here they were joined by their kindred from all parts of the island, while the conquerors took possession of the other portions of the country.*

Still later the Milesian invaders, from whom the ruling families of Ireland traced their descent, obtained control of the island, but they seem to have differed from the Tuatha-de-Dananns chiefly in the degree of their civilization. It is notable that all of these invasions are said to have come from the continent, instead of from the adjacent island of Britain.

Here we have the names of three distinct peoples successively ruling in Ireland—the aboriginal Fomorians, the Firbolgs and the Tuatha-de-Dananns—and the question arises, Who were they? As Gaelic is a Keltic language we may assume that the Tuatha-de-Dananns, who left the final impress upon the country, were a Keltic race; but with regard to the others it seems equally certain that one at least was not Keltic, if indeed it belonged to the Aryan stock at all. In the manuscript *Book of Mac Firbis*, written about 1650, we are told that “every one who is black, loquacious, lying, tale-telling or of low and groveling mind, is of the Firbolg descent,” while “every one who is fair-haired, of large size, fond of music and horse riding, and practices the art of magic, is of Tuatha De Danaan

* The original MS. account of the *Cat·Mag·Tuiread·* or Battle of Moytura is preserved in the library of Trinity College in Dublin, besides which there are two or three copies. An excellent summary of this account, with an identification of the locations, is given by Sir Wm. Wilde, Lough Corrib., Dublin, 1867.

descent."* These two distinct types—one large-bodied and blond, the other darker and generally more slender—exist in Ireland to day, and the difference has been noted by every observant traveler. The blond race is most numerous east of the Shannon, the portion occupied by the Tuatha-de-Dananns, while the darker race is found chiefly along the west coast, to which the old Fomorians and Firbolgs retired when their power was broken. The inroads of the Danes and later invaders are not sufficient to account for this difference. The testimony of most ancient writers goes to show that the Kelts were of the blond type, but the Firbolgs are expressly described as a dark race, inferior in intellect to their conquerors, the Tuatha-de-Dananns. Nothing is said of the physical type or mental status of the Fomorians, but the indications are that they were but little removed from savagery. If the Firbolgs were Kelts they cannot have differed greatly from the Tuatha-de-Dananns, and it is possible that the Mac Firbis confounded under one name the Firbolgs and the earlier Fomorians, who were both driven to take refuge along the western coast, where they became allies against the common enemy. At all events we have evidence of the former existence in Ireland of a pre-Keltic dark race, physically and intellectually different from the conquering race, and there is good ground for the opinion that either the Firbolgs or the Fomorians were a part of that ancient people who preceded the Kelts in western Europe, and who, under the various names of Silures, Iberians and perhaps Ligurians, have left traces of their former presence in Britain, France, Spain and Italy, but whose limits have been contracted by centuries of conquest and absorption, until their modern descendants, the Basques, are now confined to the valleys of the Pyrenees. How far this hypothesis may be true must be left for the philologist and archaeologist to decide by a critical study of the language and antiquities of Ireland, and their comparison with the prehistoric languages and antiquities of the continent.

DISPOSITION OF THE BODY—GRAVE TYPES.

In studying the funeral remains of ancient Ireland we find the body disposed of in three distinct ways, by disjointed burial, by extended burial and by cremation, the last method being by far the most common. The process of embalming or mummy burial seems to have been unknown as well as the contracted burial, so frequent in English mounds and probably belonging to the early Saxon period. The burial structures may also be divided into three classes, the mound, the subterranean kistvaen and the simple urn. The character of the structure, however, is no indication of the condition of the human remains, as the mound may cover either

* Quoted from Eugene O'Curry's translation, by Sir Wm. Wilde, *The Boyne and the Blackwater*, 2d ed., Dublin, 1850, 218 and 221. The rendering is somewhat different in O'Curry's *Lectures on the Manuscript Materials of Ancient Irish History* (reissue, 223-4, Dublin, 1878), and the detailed description there given of the descendants of the Firbolgs shows that they were held in utter contempt by the later races. The fact that magic powers are attributed to the Tuatha-de-Dananns probably indicates their superiority to the earlier races in the arts and in general knowledge.

a skeleton or a cinerary urn, while in many cases the skeleton and the cremated remains are found together.* The two methods of disjointed and extended burial belong either to two distinct races or to widely separated periods, while cremation appears to have been practiced at all times and by different races. As Fomorians, Firbolgs and Tuatha-de-Dananns each in turn held sway over the whole island until restricted and hemd in by a late invasion, it follows that we may expect to find the remains of any one people most numerous where their dominion was earliest established or where they held out longest against their conquerors. An archæologic map of Ireland, which should indicate the character and number of the prehistoric remains in each district of the country, would be invaluable in this connection, but without this we are obliged to depend upon descriptions of isolated monuments, and it is therefore impossible to mark out race areas.

As cremation cannot be assigned to any particular period, we shall speak first of disjointed burial, which evidently belongs to a very ancient and distinct race type. According to Wilde, the disjointed skeleton is usually found beneath the surface in "a kistvaen, or small stone chamber, roofed either with a single flag or covered in with that form of arch resembling a beehive dome. There is no tumulus or heap of earth to mark the site of these sepulchres, several of which have been turned up with the plow. Within this small square vault the bones are generally placed in a regular manner, the small ones at the bottom, the long ones, as the legs and arms, at the top, and the whole is crowned with the skull."† In one instance, in the Queen's county, the stone chamber was found in the outer circle of a rath, or prehistoric earth fort, and close beside the skeleton was one of the most beautiful cinerary urns ever found in the country. From the general form and symmetry of some of the skulls found with this mode of interment, Wilde is inclined to think that the owners belonged to one of the highest types of the Indo-European race.

A remarkable mound opened in the County Sligo, one of the last strongholds of the Fomorians and Firbolgs, was found to contain a large kistvaen, within which were the remains of six human interments. In each case the bones were piled in the manner described and surmounted by the skull, but the smaller bones were all half-burned, while around each pile

* According to Rooke Pennington, such is the case also in England. In an article on the "Relative Ages of Cremation and Contracted Burial in Derbyshire," he says: "In fact, it is the rule to find interments in the two modes in the same barrow." *Jour. Anth. Inst.*, iv, 271, London, 1875.

† W. R. Wilde, *The Boyne and the Blackwater*, 2d ed., 231, Dublin, 1850. The distinguished author, the late Sir William Wilde, was the master spirit in Irish archæology. To avoid needless repetition it may be here stated that, unless otherwise noted, the following descriptions of the prehistoric sepulchral remains at New Grange, Dowth and elsewhere, are based mainly upon the statements in the valuable chapter on "The Ethnology of the Ancient Irish" in the work above quoted. The statements there given have been compared with those of Holden, Kinahan, Lewis and others in the volumes of the *Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*, and such conclusions drawn as seemed warranted by the facts.

was collected a quantity of the bones of birds and small quadrupeds and mollusks.

It is evident that the bones could not have been arranged in this manner until by some process the skeleton had first been denuded of the flesh. This practice was common to many tribes of America, Africa, Australia, and Polynesia. The body was generally buried until the flesh had had time to decay, when the bones were taken up and cleaned and afterward laid away in a place set apart for that purpose. Some tribes allowed the body to decay on scaffolds above ground, while the Australians first skinned the corpse and then cut the flesh from the bones, roasted it over a fire and partook of the cannibal feast.* With the Hurons, Choctaws and other Indian tribes the final disposition of the bones was made the occasion of a solemn feast of the dead,† and when the tribe removed to a new location the bones were carefully packed up and taken along by the surviving relatives, just as the Chinese returning from America to their native land bring with them the bones of their deceased friends whose bodies have been temporarily deposited in foreign soil.

We may assume that the people who practiced this method were earlier and lower in the scale than those who practiced extended burial or simple cremation, as we know from analogy that disjointed burial, as a national custom, is found only among savages. The existence of ossuaries in Paris, Naples, and other large cities on the continent, as well as the practice of bone exhumation in Ireland, is due to the lack of grave space in the regular cemeteries, while in these ancient Irish interments each disjointed skeleton is commonly isolated in a separate grave. The beautiful pottery sometimes found in the vault is no evidence of a high development, as it is well known that the rudest tribes frequently excel in this art. The shape of the skull shows, if it shows anything, not the degree of civilization to which the race had attained, but the degree of which it was capable, while the very method of burial, with the attendant indication of human as well as animal sacrifice, proves that while this race may have been of the Aryan stock, it was a race which had as yet made hardly the first step toward civilization.

The examples of entire or extended burial are rare. The kistvaen in this case is enclosed in a mound and contains one or more skeletons in a recumbent position. A mound of this class in the Phoenix park, Dublin, opened in 1838, contained a stone chamber with two perfect male skeletons and parts of another, with a single bone, apparently that of a dog. Under each skull were a number of small sea shells, which may have formed a necklace or an amulet. A small bone fibula, resembling those found in Denmark, and a flint arrow head, were also found. Within the mound, but

* Albert McDonald, *Mode of Preparing the Dead among the Natives of the Upper Mary River, Queensland*, Jour. Anth. Inst., ii, 116-9, London, 1873; Edward Palmer, *Notes on some Australian Beliefs*, Jour. Anth. Inst., xiii, 283, London, 1884. For the method in use among the Choctaws, etc., see Adair, *Am. Inds.*, 183, London, 1775.

† Francis Parkman, *The Jesuits in North America*, 71-8, Boston, 1867; James Adair, *Hist. Am. Inds.*, 183, London, 1775.

not within the kistvaen, wer found four urns containing incinerated human remains. These wer either a later burial or wer the remains of victims sacrificed to the manes of the heros intombd within the kistvaen.

In 1849 four skeletons wer found near Cushendall, County Antrim. "What adds particular interest to these human remains is, that a small stone celt or hatchet, and two bronze celts, wer found along with them; these weapons enable us to form some conjecture of the *probable* age of the skuls, and also show that the bronze and stone weapons wer used at the same time in this country; but that which fixes the date of the interment of these skeletons was the discovery of two small Saxon silver coins of the early part of the ninth century." *

Several considerations render it probable that the instances of extended burial ar not of Irish, but of Danish origin. The Danish and Scandinavian pirates began their inroads upon the east coast of Ireland in 795, and continued their plundering expeditions for over two centuries until their power was broken by the battle of Clontarf in 1014. During this period they establishd themselves so firmly in the principal seaport towns that Dublin itself became a Danish settlement. The few instances of extended burial ar found chiefly along the east coast, within the area of Danish invasion, while the articles found in the tombs correspond with the contents of Danish sepulchres. The Saxon coins found in the tomb at Cushendall fix the date within the Danish period, at a time when the Danes wer as much dreaded in England as in Ireland. Moreover, we hav the testimony of Mallet that at this period—just before their conversion to Christianity—the Danes and Scandinavians practiced this mode of burial.† The presence of stone implements along with those of bronz has been noted also in the English mounds by Rooke Pennington, who is of the opinion that this may be due to a veneration for the stone instrument as an amulet after it had been superseded in actual use by the metal weapon.‡

We come now to cremation and those large burial mounds which hav their typical example in that of New Grange. As this celebrated tumulus is the largest and most elaborate of its kind in Western Europe, a somewhat extended notice is here in place. It must be stated at the outset that, altho its purpose is undoubtedly sepulchral, there is no proof that human remains hav ever been found within it, but from the account of the first writer who described it in 1699 there is every reason to believ that it had been enterd and despoild long before, probably by the Danes, who had one of their principal settlements at Drogheda, in the immediate vicinity of New Grange. It would be the more likely to suffer at their hands as it was the most conspicuous monument in that region. Indeed, we hav the positiv statement in the Annals that the principal grave

* W. R. Wilde, *The Boyne and the Blackwater*, 2d ed., 239, Dublin, 1850.

† P. H. Mallet, *Northern Antiquities*, Bohn's edition, 208-211, London, 1847.

‡ Tumuli and Stone Circles near Castleton, Derbyshire. *Jour Anth. Inst.*, iv, 383, London, 1875. The same idea is advanced by an author noted in Mallet's *Northern Antiquities*, Bohn's edition, 211, London, 1847.

mounds of Brugh-na-Boinne wer plunderd by the Danes in the year 862. Brugh-na-Boinne was the royal cemetery of the Tuatha-de-Danann kings and their Milesian successors, who held their court at Tara, and stretchd for a mile in width along the north bank of the Boyne from Slane in the County Meath to a point about three miles below. Within or adjoining this area ar more than twenty mounds of various sizes, the largest of which is New Grange, while several others ar but little inferior to it, and the whole surface is honeycombd with sepulchral remains.

The New Grange tumulus has sufferd at the hands of builders and road contractors, but is stil about eighty feet high and covers an area of nearly two acres. It was formerly surrounded by a circle of enormous stones placed about ten yards apart. Some of these stil remain, but the pillar stone which once crown'd the summit has disappeard. The body of the mound, under the surface layer of earth, is formd of small stones gatherd in the neighborhood, while the immense stones of the interior passages ar generally different in character from any rock found in the vicinity, and some of them must hav been transported from the Mourne mountains, forty miles distant. The mound is enterd by a passage, running nearly north and south, which is sixty-three feet long and is formd of large upright stones roofd with immense flags, supported partly by the upright stones and partly by masonry on the other side. The height of the passage for about three-fourths of its length is about six feet, when it rises so as to slope gradually into the roof of the central chamber. Some of the stones forming this part of the wall ar ten feet high. The average width of the passage is three feet. This passage, with three offsets running out at right angles from the central chamber, giv the interior the ground plan of a cross. One of these offsets is eight feet deep, nine feet high, and seven feet wide. The central chamber is elliptical and is eighteen feet in its longest diameter from the entrance to the opposit wall. The walls ar formd of large upright stones about ten feet high supporting a dome-shaped roof formd by several courses of somewhat smaller stones, each course projecting beyond that below it until the dome is closed by a single flag at the top. This manner of constructing the dome was common to many early nations, and shows that the builders had not yet discovered the principle of the arch. The height to the centre of the dome is nineteen and one-half feet. The stones of the interior, as wel as one or two near the entrance, ar coverd with curious carvings, chiefly lozenges, zig-zags and volutes, sometimes standing out in relief. A remarkable fact in this connection is that on some of these stones the carving not only covers the exposed portions but also extends over a part of the surface which had been completely conceald from view and out of the reach of a tool until uncoverd within recent times, showing that these stones must hav been carvd before they were placed in position in the mound, and perhaps formd part of some structure stil more ancient. In regard to these stones Miss A. W. Buckland thinks that they "were evidently sculptured before they were placed in their present position, and indeed, indications are not

wanting that some of the blocks are, perhaps, more profusely ornamented at the back which is covered by the earth, than on the side exposed to view." * In each of the three recesses is an oval stone basin about three feet long. This, Wilde considers "a rude primitive sarcophagus," and sums up his impressions as to the general purpose of the tumulus as follows: "We believe, with most modern investigators into such subjects, that it was a tomb or great sepulchral pyramid, similar in every respect to those now standing by the banks of the Nile." †

The large adjacent mound of Dowth is similar to that of New Grange in structure and general arrangement of the interior, excepting that there is no central chamber, the offsets running out directly from the main passage. Some of the stones are carved with wheels and concentric circles resembling those sometimes found on Scandinavian dolmens. There are also leaf carvings so perfect as almost to be taken at first sight for fossils. Within the inner passage is a stone basin similar to those at New Grange, but much larger. It was found in fragments, the pieces having been scattered through the passages, probably by the Danes, who plundered the mound in 862. Mixed with the accumulated rubbish within the passages there have been found at different times heaps and scattered fragments of burned bones, many of which were human, together with numerous unburned bones of birds, deer and domestic animals. With these were also found "glass and amber beads of unique shapes, portions of jet bracelets, a curious stone button or fibula, bone bodkins, copper pins and iron knives and rings." ‡ A stone urn has also been found within the passage and another in a kistvaen in the mound.

It is probable that both these mounds were originally designed to hold the incinerated remains of some of the royal line of the Tuatha-de-Dananns, whose ashes may have rested within the stone basins already mentioned, or perhaps were placed in urns upon them.

The most common form in connection with cremation is the urn burial, concerning which Wilde says that "the cinerary urn containing the remains of burned human bones has been found not only as a separate and distinct form of burial, but also in connection with the cairn, the cromlech, and the kistvaen or small stone chamber. Moreover, we have instances of bones being found partially or completely burned in some of the larger sepulchres, without any trace of the urn whatsoever." § In 1842, while working a quarry near Drogheda, a farmer came upon from one hundred to two hundred urns of unbaked clay, of various sizes, nearly all placed in an inverted position and each containing incinerated human bones. They were placed a few feet apart, without any apparent regularity and without any flag or stones to protect them, so that

* Notes on some Cornish and Irish Prehistoric Monuments, Jour. Anth. Inst., ix, 152, London, 1880.

† W. R. Wilde, *The Boyne and the Blackwater*, 2d ed., 201, Dublin, 1850.

‡ Idem, 209.

§ Idem, 232.

most of them had been prest in and broken by the weight of the earth above. One of those examind containd the remains of several individuals, together with bones of birds and some small animal. In another wer found a flint arrow head and a small bone needle.

The urn is also found in connection with the dolmen, as in the mound in Phoenix park, already mentiond, where four urns containing ashes and burnd bones wer found inclosed in small separate stone chambers in different parts of the tumulus, but not within the central dolmen itself. Several kistvaens containing urns hav also been found near Cummer, County Wexford, one of which containd a large urn with a smaller one, handsomely ornamented, inside of it, but so far as known no ornaments or implements of any kind wer found in connection with any of them.* A third disposition is shown in the Queen's county interment previously noted, where the urn was placed by the side of the skeleton and within the kistvaen.

The cremation was sometimes accomplishd within the tomb, as appears from the account of a small kistvaen, approachd by means of a narrow passage way, discoverd immediately adjacent to the great mound of New Grange. "In it were a quantity of human bones and those of small animals, pigs, sheep, dogs, and fowl; some burned and some not bearing any marks of fire; but the most remarkable circumstance about it was that the bottom of this little chamber was lined with stones, the upper surfaces of which bore evident marks of fire—in fact, were vitrified—showing that the victim, or the dead body, was burned within the grave."†

Three distinct methods of urn burial in the County Antrim hav been described by Mr. J. S. Holden.‡ In the simplest form, several urns ar found imbedded in a layer of earth within a dolmen placed immediately upon the natural surface, without the protection of a surrounding mound. In another instance the kistvaen was approachd by a coverd passage and the whole structure inclosed in a parallelogram, sixteen by thirty-five feet, composed of twenty-six large pillar stones. The chard bones and fragments of urns wer found scatterd through the passage, showing that the tomb had been previously enterd and plunderd. In another instance a large urn was inverted within a small kistvaen placed at one end of a pavement formd of basaltic slabs, the whole inclosed in a mound. Within the mound, but outside the kistvaen, wer the fragments of several smaller urns. The remains in the principal urn seemd to be those of an old man of low stature. The urns found in each case wer similar and of very rude manufacture and wer frequently inverted upon a slab. Numerous flint instruments wer found and one glass bead, but no remains whatever of

* G. H. Kinahan, On a Circular Structure at Cummer, Co. Wexford, *Jour. Anth. Inst.*, xii, 318-322, London, 1883.

† W. R. Wilde, *The Boyne and the Blackwater*, 2d ed., 203, Dublin, 1850.

‡ On Some Forms of Ancient Interments in County Antrim, *Jour. Anth. Inst.*, i, 219-221, London, 1872.

metal. With regard to the authors of these Antrim tombs, Mr. Holden says: "Though the structural forms of interment differ so much over so small an area, yet it is highly probable that all were erected by the same race and people, who thus showed their reverence and respect for the dead, according to the rank they held while living. The total absence of metal, and presence of worked flint, do not allow their civilization to be placed higher than the Neolithic period."

In the manuscript narrativ of the Battle of Moytura, already referd to, there is an account of a Firbolg hero who lost his life in defending that of his king. The Firbolgs came up soon after, and each one taking a stone in his hand, they erected a monumental carn over the body, calling it the "Carn of the One Man." After reading the detaild account in the manuscript and going carefully over the ground, Sir William Wilde became convinced that the tomb was identical with a mound, crown'd with a circle of standing stones, situated on the southern border of Lough Mask and known under the name of Carn Mínín Uisge.* The chief point in the identification was the vicinity of a remarkable wel, at which, according to the account, the king was surprised by his enemies. Procuring some men, Sir William put them to work excavating the mound, telling them beforehand that if it had not been already open'd, they would find within it a chamber containing the remains of the Firbolg hero. True to the prediction they soon came upon a large horizontal flag, below which was another somewhat larger. On removing this latter it was found to cover a small square chamber twenty-eight inches high and thirty-seven wide, the walls of which wer form'd of small stones. Within this chamber was found a small urn, of beautiful design and ornamentation, containing incinerated human bones. "Here, no doubt," says Wilde, "the body of the loyal Firbolg youth was burned, and his ashes collected and preserved in this urn. Perhaps a more convincing proof of the authenticity of Irish or any other ancient history has never been afforded."†

From this it seems evident that the Firbolgs practiced cremation, and the same account specifies four different classes of burial structures—mounds, hillocks, pillar stones and simple graves—which they erected over the slain, according to the rank of the warrior. The monumental pillar stone, sometimes bearing an Ogham inscription, in connection with the tomb, is frequently mention'd in the old manuscripts, and stone and tomb alike took their name from the hero whose remains wer there interd.

In the same manuscript is an account of a carn which the Firbolgs erected over the head of one of their slain heroes, which they recovered from the enemy, while on the other hand the Tuatha-de-Dananns erected a monument over the severd arm of one of their champions, who afterward became king of Ireland under the title of Nuadhat (*Nuath*) of the

* Pronounced, Carn Meeneen Ishga, probably signifying "carn of the little watery plain."

† W. R. Wilde, Lough Corrib, 226, Dublin, 1867.

Silver Hand, the place of the missing member being supplied by an artificial substitute. As if in confirmation of these statements there is an instance on record where a stone coffin was discovered in the County Wicklow, "just large enough to contain a small urn, which was inverted over two small bones belonging to human fingers and toes, and no other part of the body."*

The stone dolmens, sepulchral or otherwise, are popularly known throughout Ireland as "giants' graves," and many stories are current of giant skeletons found within them. It is hardly necessary to state that no such skeletons have been found, the supposed giants' bones being probably those of some of the larger domestic animals which formed a part of the funeral sacrifice. The mounds and circular earthen forts, on the other hand, are universally attributed to the fairies or "good people," who are supposed to dwell within them, and so deeply is this belief rooted in the minds of the people that very few of the older ones would venture to lift a spadeful of earth or even to cut a bush from the neighborhood of such a structure. In some instances burial kistvaens have been found in the outer circumference of the rath, or earthen fort.

We have thus seen that the ancient inhabitants of Ireland disposed of their dead by cremation, by disjointed burial and by extended burial, the first method being almost universal, while the last mentioned is rare and apparently of intrusive origin. The human remains were inclosed within an urn or stone coffin, the urn itself being sometimes within the coffin. The place of burial was sometimes unmarked, at other times distinguished by a pillar stone, a hillock, a dolmen, or an immense mound. Weapons, ornaments, and probably amulets were buried with the dead, and there is abundant evidence that both human and animal sacrifice frequently accompanied the funeral ceremonies. The human victims were probably prisoners taken in war and perhaps were of a different race from that of the principal occupant of the tomb, while the animals slaughtered were generally such as might have furnished a funeral feast to those in attendance. Should this picture seem dark to the patriotic Irishman he may find comfort in the reflection that exactly the same thing may be said of probably every nation in Europe.

Strabo asserts that at the beginning of the Christian era the Irish practiced cannibalism and regarded it as an honorable deed to eat the flesh of their dead parents.† With regard to this statement it may be said that, while this practice is widespread among savage tribes—founded, as it is, on the natural idea that by partaking of the flesh they imbibe the desirable qualities of the dead man‡—the Irish at that period were already a

* W. R. Wilde, *The Boyne and the Blackwater*, 2d ed., 234, Dublin, 1850.

† Strabo, iv, 6, 2 and 4, quoted by Fligier, *Mittheil. Anth. Gesell.*, ix, 249, Wien, 1880.

‡ Speaking of Australian funeral customs, a competent authority says: "I am, as I said, obliged to confess that the natives eat the flesh of some of their departed friends, and evidently think by so doing they are both benefiting themselves and conferring an honor upon the dead. It is not done altogether from a craving after human flesh. * * * The reason, I am told, is that by partaking of the flesh of a person they inherit the virtues of that person." Albert McDonald, *Mode of Preparing the Dead among the Natives of the Upper Mary River, Queensland*, *Jour. Anth. Inst.*, ii, 179, London, 1873.

civilized nation and not a horde of savages. As the island was never conquered by the Romans the early geographers knew very little of the people or customs of the country, and Strabo's statement might be more worthy of attention had he not followed it up with an assertion which even the worst Hibernophobe will hardly credit.

THE ROUND TOWERS—ROYAL BURIAL.

Before leaving the ancient burial monuments it is necessary to speak of the round towers, concerning which there has been so much discussion. There are nearly one hundred of these towers still existing in Ireland in different degrees of preservation, the perfect specimens varying from seventy to one hundred and thirty feet in height and from eight to fifteen feet in diameter. Excepting in two or three instances the entrance is at a considerable distance above the ground, and each of the lower stories is lighted by a single window, while the uppermost story has four windows, facing the cardinal points. They have been assigned to every period from prehistoric antiquity down to the twelfth century, and their origin has been ascribed to Druids, Danes and Christian saints, while different writers have seen in them sun temples, phallic monuments, beacon towers, minarets, burial structures, belfries, depositories for sacred vessels, penitential cells, anchorite hermitages and baptisteries. With all these theories, the balance of evidence is in favor of their remote pagan origin and connection with the ancient fire and sun worship of Ireland. Human skeletons, and sometimes cremated remains, have been found interred within a number of those which have been examined. In some instances the interment was evidently comparatively modern, a supposition rendered the more probable by the proximity of an old burying ground, but in at least one instance—that of the tower of Ardmore—the indications were that the bodies had been laid to rest before the foundations of the tower had been completed.

In 1841, "Mr. O'Dell, the proprietor of Ardmore, in the county of Waterford, intended to erect floors in the tower there, and explored the interior of the tower down to the foundation. With considerable difficulty he caused to be removed a vast accumulation of small stones, under which were layers of large masses of rock, and having reached as low down as within a few inches of the external foundation, it was deemed useless and dangerous to proceed any further, and in this opinion some members of the society who had witnessed what had been done, coincided. In this state of the proceedings a letter from Sir William Betham was forwarded to Mr. O'Dell, intimating that further exploration would be desirable, upon which the latter gentleman, at great peril, commenced the task again. He now found another series of large rocks so closely wedged together that it was difficult to introduce any implement between them; after considerable labor these were also removed, and at length a perfectly smooth floor of mortar was reached, which he feared must be regarded as *a ne plus ultra*; but, still persevering, he removed the mortar, underneath

which he found a bed of mould, and under this, some feet below the outside foundation, was discovered lying prostrate, from E. to W., a human skeleton."*

In this instance it seems there can be no question that the interment was made at the same time that the building of the tower was begun. In some cases, however, the interment seems to have been of secondary importance and rather accidental, and as before stated, the weight of evidence is against the sepulchral theory. Might not the Ardmore remains be those of a victim sacrificed to the earth spirit to insure the stability of the structure? Such sacrifice in connection with the erection of a new temple, bridge or fortress was one of the most widespread customs of antiquity, the victim being generally walled up alive within the masonry. The practice—now changed into animal sacrifice—still exists among the peasantry of Servia and other countries in Southeastern Europe, and some popular house-building ceremonies point to the former existence of a similar custom in Ireland. Human sacrifice was one of the most important Druidic rites, and where would it seem more appropriate than in connection with the building of a Druidic temple?†

In the ancient Irish Annals we find a number of interesting statements in connection with royal burial in the early part of the Christian era. Thus the corpse of King Dathi, before being consigned to the tomb, was placed upon a bier by his clansmen and carried to the front of the battle to inspire courage in themselves and terror in their enemies. A similar incident took place within more recent times in an encounter between the rival forces of O'Neill and O'Donnell, subsequent to the Norman invasion. King Cormac Mac Art, who embraced Christianity long before the coming of Saint Patrick, is said to have lost his life in consequence of the magic spells of the Druids, whose religion he had renounced. In his last moments he ordered that he should be buried at Ros-na-righ (now Rosnaree in Meath) instead of with his royal predecessors at Brugh-na-Boinne, because the latter was a pagan cemetery. After his death his attendants, in despite of his injunctions, made three several attempts to convey his body to Brugh-na-Boinne, but were prevented each time by a sudden rising of the waters of the Boyne, until, regarding the occurrence as an omen, they finally dug his grave at Ros-na-Righ in accordance with his wishes. Laoghaire (Lairy or Leary), who ruled at Tara on the arrival of Saint Patrick in 432, was buried in a standing position in the outer rampart of his fortress, with his weapons and war dress upon him, and with his face turned southward toward his enemies, the Leinstermen. This brings forcibly to mind Catlin's account of the burial of Blackbird, the great chief of the Omahas.‡

* Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Hall, *Ireland: Its Scenery, Character, etc.*, ii, 57 note, new ed. R. Worthington, importer, n. d. (written about 1850). On page 203, Volume iii, of the same work, it is stated that *two* skeletons were thus found in the tower.

† See M. J. Walhouse, *Some Vestiges of Girl Sacrifice, etc., in India and the East*, Jour. Anth. Inst., xi, 415, London, 1882; F. S. Krauss, *Das Bauopfer bei den Südslaven*, Mittheil. Anthropol. Gesell., xvii, 16, Wien, 1887.

‡ George Catlin, *North Am. Inds.*, 3d ed., ii, 5, New York, 1844.

The pagan Irish wer accustomed to bring home from the battlefield the heads of their slain enemies. The brains wer then taken out, mixd with lime and formd into a ball, which was hardend by exposure to the sun, and was afterward exhibited on public occasions as an evidence of bravery and a trophy of victory. There is an old legend that Mesgedhra, King of Leinster, lost his life in an engagement with the forces of Ulster, who took out the brains from the head and prepared them in this manner. But there was dread in Ulster, for a prophecy had gon forth that the dead Mesgedhra should yet avenge himself upon the men of Ulster. The brain ball afterward fel into the hands of the Connaught men, one of whom, placing it in a sling, threw it with such force at the king of Ulster that it was buried two-thirds of its depth in his forehead. The royal physician examind the wound and told him that to remove the ball would be instant death, but that he might liv for many years by abstaining from any undue excitement which might tend to loosen it. There was no appeal, and the king was forced to forego the battlefield, the chase and the banquet-hall, and become a solitary recluse. The years went on until one day, while sitting in lonely musing, an awful terror came over the king as he saw the noonday brightness suddenly darkend, while a single flash of lightning darted through the gloom and a peal of thunder shook the palace to its foundation. He sent for his druid to learn the meaning of the awful wonder, and was told that at that moment the Son of God had expired upon the cross. The druid went on to tel of the Savior's love, of the great atonement and of the agonizing death upon the cross, and how, even at the last, He prayed, not for justice or vengeance, but for mercy for his enemies.

“ With a bound from his seat rose King Conor, the red flush of rage on his face,
Fast he ran through the hall for his weapons, and snatching his sword from its place,
He rushed to the woods, striking wildly at boughs that dropped down with each blow,
And he cried : ‘ Were I midst the vile rabble, I’d cleave them to earth even so !
With the strokes of a high King of Erin, the whirls of my keen-tempered sword,
I would save from their horrible fury that mild and that merciful Lord.’
His frame shook and heaved with emotion ; the brain ball leaped forth from his head,
And commending his soul to that Saviour, King Conor Mac Nessa fell dead.” *

In treating of the funeral customs of modern Ireland it must be stated at the outset that most of the beliefs and practices described ar rapidly dying out and ar now almost unknown to the younger generation in many parts of the country. They ar stil fresh in the memory of the older people, however, and ar yet in ful force in the remoter districts along the west coast, especially in Connemara. The decay of these customs is due largely to the rapid spread of education, which has taught the people the folly of many of the old beliefs, while the stirring political events of the last forty years hav left them little time for the observance of former ceremonies. Another cause is the general introduction of hearses and other wheeld vehicles, which hav to a great extent done away with “ walking

* Death of King Conor Mac Nessa, by T. D. Sullivan.

funerals," as they are called. Another most important factor is the determined fight which the Catholic priests have always made against the practices of the wake, until at last they have almost succeeded in abolishing the custom. The old observances, however, had a strong hold upon the minds of the people and frequently come to the surface again when least expected. This was exemplified in a striking manner a few years since in the south of Ireland. A young man had died in a district in which the funeral cry had long fallen into disuse. Just as the procession was leaving the house his mother, or some near female relative, broke into a passionate eulogy of the dead, when instantly every woman present, as if moved by a common impulse, raised the *ullagone* and took her place behind the leader, and once more the wild wailing of the *caoine* floated over the hills until the corpse reached its final resting place. Such is the power of an old custom acting upon impressionable natures at a critical moment.

OMENS—THE BEAN-SIGHE AND FAIRY INFLUENCE.

The Irish have a number of death omens, most of which are common to the rest of Europe, and therefore need not be described here. Many of these are taken from the actions and appearance of animals. Thus the howling of a dog presages the death of a member or relative of the family, according as the animal looks toward the house or away from it at the time. For this reason it is customary in Connemara when a dog howls at night to send some one outside to see which way the animal is facing. In the same way a dull ringing or crying sound in the right ear betokens the death of a near friend; in the left ear, that of a distant relative. The same belief is held in Scotland. The croaking of a raven near the house is also a fatal omen. Should a rooster fly up in the rafters and crow before midnight, it is regarded as a sign of an approaching death, and the omen is considered infallible if the bird be a *Coilleach Martain* (pronounced *Cul-yakh Mawr-than*) or "March cock," that is, one hatched in March from an egg laid in the same month. There are a number of strange beliefs in connection with the *Coilleach Martain*, which is thought to possess occult powers. The untimely crowing of a rooster is regarded as a death omen throughout Europe, and also in China, where several precautions are taken to avert the threatening calamity.* Flies lighting upon the body of a sick person, or butterflies hovering about in the sick-room, also presage the approach of death, while of magpies it is said that

"One is for sorrow, two for luck,
Three for a wedding, and four for death." †

Great attention is also paid to dreams and to a hundred other things which are lucky or unlucky in their consequences, such, for instance, as

* A. M. Fielde, Chinese Superstitions, in Popular Science Monthly, xxxii, 798, New York, April, 1888.

† In Scotland it runs thus: "One bodes grief, two's a death,
Three's a wedding, four's a birth."

James Napier, Folk Lore or Superstitious Beliefs in the West of Scotland, 113, Paisley, 1879.

carrying fire out of a house in which some one is lying sick, or meeting a hare or a red-haired woman when starting on a journey, all of which are regarded as unlucky. Among the Galway fishermen a sudden blast of wind from the ocean is a sign that some one has just been drowned at sea. According to Lady Wilde, they say also that such an accident is often preceded by low music issuing from beneath the water—the melodies of the fairies who are about to charm away the victim.* The same author states that there are certain death omens connected with particular families. Thus in one family the omen is a mysterious crashing sound and a sudden blast of wind through the house. The death of an officer in the Crimea was announced in this way, the news following immediately after the warning sound.† It is also believed that the spirit of one who is soon to die, although perhaps in perfect health at the time, sometimes leaves the body by night and appears to some near friend, who thus has a certain warning of the approaching death.

But of all the beliefs in regard to death omens, the wildest and the most peculiarly Irish is that of the *Bean-sighe*.‡ This is the disembodied spirit of a woman who in former days was connected in some way with one of the old princely families of Ireland. The *Bean-sighe* never concerned herself with any of the upstart breed of the foreigner, but faithfully attended those of the ancient race even when, deprived of their possessions by war and confiscation, they sank to the level of peasants and laborers, and instances are related where she has even followed their decaying fortunes in their exile beyond the ocean. Her mission is to give warning, by a plaintive wailing cry, of the near approaching death of one of the family, and this cry is repeated at the moment when the soul leaves the body. This belief, which has been called “the wildest and grandest of all the Irish superstitions,” has its parallels on the continent, the most notable example being that of the spectral “White Woman” who waits upon the royal family of Prussia, but these are isolated cases, while in Ireland the *Bean-sighe* is a part of the popular belief throughout the country. The spirit is generally heard at night, sometimes at midday, and very rarely in the morning. The mournful cry is generally the only indication of her presence, but in a few instances she has been seen for a moment as a rapidly receding figure having the appearance of a withered old woman clad in

* Lady Wilde (Speranza), *Ancient Legends, Mystic Charms and Superstitions of Ireland*, i, 151, London, 1887. While this work—in two volumes—necessarily contains a number of valuable points, it is a real disappointment when we consider the exceptional opportunities enjoyed by the author during a life-long residence in Ireland, half of which was spent in the wildest districts of Galway. Of legends there are hardly any beyond a few local traditions, while the statements in regard to the popular customs and beliefs are all loose and fragmentary and full of vague theorizing. The best portions of the book are those taken from the writings of the late Sir William Wilde, the distinguished husband of the authoress, and a man well versed in all that pertained to the national life of the people.

† *Idem*, i, 266.

‡ Pronounced, and commonly written, *Banshee*. From *bean* “woman” and *sighe* “spirit.”

flowing white drapery. The Bean sighe is generally anonymous, like the Puca or Leprechán, but a few of the more noted ones have special names. Thus the Bean sighe of the O'Neils, the ancient royal race of Ulster, is called Maoveen. She frequented their ancestral seat, Shane's Castle in the County Antrim, where it is said that "to hint a doubt of the existence of the Banshee of the O'Neils would, in the estimation of their people, be tantamount to blasphemy."* The cry of the Bean-sighe, which has been likened to the sound of the caoine, resembles the mournful sighing of an autumn wind, tremulous, rising and falling, and audible at a great distance, while something human runs through all the tones. At times she seems to clap her hands while wailing, like the women around a corpse. The cry is usually heard by all those in the house, but in some cases is distinguished only by one specially gifted. A few instances will illustrate this belief. The first, from Hall's Ireland (iii, 106 note), was related by an old school-master concerning one of the MacCarthys, once a ruling family in the south of Ireland:

" 'My father's family,' said he, 'were ill of "the sickness"'—so the fever is commonly called—'his neighbor, a poor widow, one MacCarthy, had her son sick also; my father went to her and begged her not to screech when the life left the boy, for fear of frightening my mother. She promised that with God's help she wouldn't. Well, at midnight we heard a scream—a loud and sorrowful and awful scream: we all heard it; and my father went out to the widow to complain that she had broken her word. He found her at home: she said her son was dead, but she hadn't crossed the doorway, keeping the grief in her heart. So he went homewards, and again he heard the voice; and he followed it for above a mile: and at last it left him at the north end of a stream.' "

The Bean-sighe sometimes gives warning of the death of a relative in another country. Of this we have an instance in the work just quoted (iii, page 108 note), related by a respectable woman who solemnly avers its truth: "When a little girl her father and mother had gone out to a wake and had left her, along with her younger sisters and brothers, in care of the house. They were all, four or five in number, gathered round the fire. Suddenly they heard a melancholy cry, as of a woman approaching the house. They ran to the door, supposing it might be the daughter of the deceased person, who was coming to borrow something for the wake; but, to their great dismay, saw no one, though they still heard the cry, passing as it were by them and down along on their right. Upon their father's return they told him what had occurred. 'Don't mind, girls,' said he,

* Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Hall, *Ireland, Picturesquely Illustrated; Its Scenery, Character, etc.*, iii, 104, new edition, New York, n. d. (about 1850). This is one of the best general books upon Ireland ever written, as the authors were well acquainted with the country and thoroughly understood the character of the people. It abounds in valuable folklore material. Although stories of the Bean-sighe are common among the people, I have chosen rather to give these published instances on account of their typical character and in order to call attention to the work quoted.

'perhaps the person whom that cry lamented is not one of us, or it may be that he is far away.' In a fortnight after they received intelligence from London that an uncle of theirs, a physician, had died there on the very night they had heard the Banshee cry. They were MacCarthys by the father's side and O'Sullivans by the mother's."

The spirits of the dead are sometimes allowed to revisit the earth to join in the lamentations over the corpse of one of the family. On the river Flesk in Kerry is a high cliff overhanging the water and taking its name from a young girl called Reinarth Bresnahan. Years ago she went out one day to look for some cows which had strayed into the mountains. She never returned, but when last seen alive she was standing on the top of this cliff and may have fallen into the water below. At each successive funeral in the family from the time of her disappearance she would be seen to enter the room, appearing in dress and features just as she did on the day she left the house for the last time, and would join in the *caoine* over the corpse. The others could see her, but were afraid to speak to her. Once she was heard crying outside the house, and soon after came the news that one of the family had died in America. The last of the Bresnahan died about fifteen years ago, when she came once more to join in the *caoine* and then disappeared forever.

The belief that sickness and death are due to the evil influence of spirits is common to all savage races as well as to the uneducated classes among civilized nations. In Ireland, where the fairy mythology reached a high development, this belief is carried still further, and it is thought in many cases that the sickness or death is only apparent, the supposed invalid or corpse being merely a substitute left by the fairies instead of the real person, whom they have carried away.* Altho seeming to lead a joyous existence, dancing by moonlight in the green forest to the sound of soft music, or holding high revel in their underground palaces, the fairies are constantly haunted by the fear of eternal condemnation at the last judgment. To avert this doom they seek to ally themselves with the mortal race, and are constantly on the watch to carry off men, women and children to serve as husbands, wives or nurses in the fairy court. The prisoner, however, must be released at the end of a certain period, unless he should be so unwise as to taste of the fairy food in the meantime, in which event he becomes dead to his friends and can never return. Exactly the same belief is held by the Dakota Indians, as appears from "A Yankton Legend," one of the collection of Siouan myths and stories by J. Owen Dorsey, which will appear in the forthcoming Volume vi of Contributions to North American Ethnology. The people tell many stories of persons who were thus carried off by the fairies, but found means to warn their friends to leave food where they could get

* For a more extended notice of the fairy influence in sickness, see the author's paper on "The Medical Mythology of Ireland," in Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society, xxiv, 133-166, Philadelphia, 1887.

it while on their nightly excursions with the "good people," who wer consequently compeld to releas them at the end of the term of three, five or seven years. I hav talkd with a number of persons of fair intelligence and education, and of varied experience, who believ and insist that their own parents, brothers or sisters wer thus carried off by the fairies, altho to all appearances they died and wer buried in the regular way. On the west coast, when a man is drownd and his friends fail to recover the body, it is known that he has been taken by the fairies and is stil alive in their caves at the bottom of the ocean. They ar sometimes seen by their former friends on their fishing trips, and in a few instances hav been allowd to return to the land of the living. A single story, told by a Roscommon woman, wil show the belief on this subject. It was related as an incident within her own knowledge, and the fairy fort referd to was in her uncle's field near Ballintubber.

A woman named Nancy Flinn was one day going to see her sister when, as she was passing near the fort, she saw a number of young men, all of whom wer strangers to her, playing hurley in the field. As she came up one of them approachd her and said, "My good woman, you go back and take another road to your sister's." She paid no attention, but kept on, when he again warnd her to turn back. Some time after, while milking, she suddenly fel down and began calling for help. As her husband came running up she cried out, "O, Ned, hold me!" He could hear the sound of blows, while she screamd at every blow. He carried her into the hous and put her to bed, but she lingerd only a short time and then died. A neighbor and his wife went to see her in the evening, and left the hous just as she drew her last breath. On their way home they stopd at the narrator's hous, pale and trembling with fear, and said that in passing the fort they had seen it all lit up with a thousand lights, and had heard sounds of rejoicing and voices crying, "We hav her at last, we hav her at last; but, Nancy, it was hard to get you."

When it is suspected that the dead person has really been carried off by the fairies, his friends ar accustomd to leav food or milk where he can get it during his nightly visits in company with the "good people," in order that he may not be obliged to partake of the fairy food. On this subject Lady Wilde incorrectly states that "it is a very general custom during some nights after a death to leav food outside the house—a griddle cake or a dish of potatoes. If it is gone in the morning the spirits must have taken it, for no human being would touch the food left for the dead."* The truth of the matter is that the food is left, not for those who ar known to be dead, but for those who ar believd to be stil alive, altho held in captivity by the fairies. On November night, however, food is left in readiness for the spirits of the dead, who then revisit their former homes, while it is a common thing to propitiate the fairies in like manner at all seasons of the year.

* Lady Wilde, *Ancient Legends of Ireland*, i, 225, London, 1887.

Immediately after death the soul appears before the judgment bar, and is sometimes condemned to return and reanimate the body during a further term of sickness until by suffering it has been rendered worthy to enter heaven. The fairies take advantage of its temporary absence to put one of their own number into the body, so that when the soul returns it finds its place occupied and is obliged to go with them. When this is thought to be the case—as evidenced by the lingering, altho plainly hopeless, nature of the illness—the friends of the sick man put a piece of *lus-mór* (pronounced *lusmore*, Gaelic “great herb”) or foxglove under his bed. If he be a changeling the fairies will at once be compelled to restore, in good health, the person taken away. If the invalid be really present in his proper person he will not recover, but die. The idea that the destruction or loss of the body forces the soul to become a wanderer is common to many primitive nations, and is at the bottom of Egyptian embalmment as well as of the Christian horror of cremation. I have not met with any other indication of such a belief in Ireland, but in one of Lady Wilde’s legends the fairies, who have captured a wicked old hag, are represented as saying: “Her soul will never rest in peace, because we shall cut up the body in little bits, and the soul will not be able to find it, but wander about in the dark to all eternity without a body.”*

Properly speaking, the fairies have no power to take life, but there is another class of spirits altogether malignant, which haunt particular localities, hovering invisible in the air overhead, and visit destruction upon all who come within their reach. Should an unaccountable sickness or death occur in a new house, it is ascribed to the presence of one of these spirits, and the owner will tear down the house and rebuild it in another place.

DYING RITES—LAYING OUT—THE MÁISTINIDH.

The Irishman obeys the injunction to remember his last end, and his constant prayer is to be delivered “from a sudden or unprovided death,” and to have a “decent funeral.” The poorest old woman will hoard up year after year from her slender means in order that she may be buried respectably when life’s struggle is over, and above all, that she may not have a pauper’s funeral, while the most poverty-stricken family will strain every nerve to perform the same office for the departed father, mother, brother or sister. In Scotland, “The first care of the young married wife was still, in my young days, to spin and get woven sufficient linen to make for herself and her husband their *dead claes*.”† So strong is this feeling that the clergy frequently find it necessary to warn their people against the reckless extravagance common on such occasions. The ancient and widespread practice of expensive funeral feasts and ceremonies undoubtedly had its origin in the desire that the soul should enter the spirit

* Lady Wilde, *Ancient Legends of Ireland*, i, 138, London, 1887.

† James Napier, *Folk-Lore*, 55, Paisley, 1879.

land with all its wants well provided for, altho in modern Europe it has come to be regarded only as a fitting tribute of respect to the departed.

As soon as an illness assumes a serious character the priest is sent for to hear the sick person's confession and help him arrange his affairs, after which the dying man awaits the end with composure and resignation. There is a general desire that death, when it comes, may occur upon Friday, the day on which Christ died, and in the west the prayer is for *Bás Aoine, guid'e Saturn agus ad'ladad' Dom'nac'.** "A Friday death, a Saturday prayer and a Sunday funeral." When it is evident that death is near at hand the priest is again calld in to administer to the dying man the last sacraments of the church. The blessed candles, which have been consecrated in the church on some previous Candlemas day, are then lighted in the room and the friends recite the prayers for the dying. In Kerry and other parts of the west twelve small wax tapers which have been thus blest, and corresponding to the number of the apostles, are fixed upright around the edge of a plate and passed from hand to hand in a circle from right to left around the head of the dying man, by relatives standing near, who recite during the while the following prayer: *Guil'im Peadar, guid'im Pól, guid'im Muir' oig' agus a Mac, guid'im a dá easpal déag, gan tu d'ul ann eug gan a g-cead,*† "I implore Peter, I implore Paul, I implore the Virgin Mary and her Son, I implore the twelve apostles, that you may not enter death without their permission." When death comes, after reciting this prayer, it is thought to be in accordance with the will of God and the saints. In the western islands twelve lighted rushes are placed around the bed of the dying man.‡ A similar practice probably prevailed formerly in the east, according to the statement of a woman of the County Meath. Her father passed away so quietly that it was several minutes before the fact of his death was discovered, when his wife, who was alone with the children, lighted a taper and held it between his clasped hands while she recited the prayers for the dying. This was fifty years ago, when Gaelic was still the language of the district. The dying person takes "three breaths of life" just before expiring, and a man always falls asleep at the approach of death, while a woman remains awake. Along the coast we find also the old belief that life goes out with the ebbing tide.

When the dying man seems to suffer great agony it is thought to be due to the presence of chicken feathers in his bed, and his friends will sometimes lift him up and place him upon the floor to relieve him. Some persons go so far as to say that feathers of any kind will cause the sick one to "die hard." It is possible that there may be some physiologic reason for this belief, as the senses of the sick are frequently alive to odors and atmospheric influences imperceptible to those around them.

* Pronounced in Connemara, somewhat incorrectly, *Baws Ena, gwíva Sáárn agus iel-akhawn Dhonakh.*

† Pronounced in Kerry, *Gweeim Pádhair, gweeim Poel, gweeim Muir' oeg agus a Moc, gweeim a dhaw awspal jaeg, gun thu ghul an yaeg gun a gadh.*

‡ Lady Wilde, *Ancient Legends of Ireland*, i, 224, London, 1887.

In Connemara when one is dying of consumption it is customary to tie some unsalted butter in a piece of cloth and hang it up in the rafters. Just as the sick person is at his last gasp all of his blood relatives leave the house and remain outside until he is dead. As he draws his last breath the consumption leaves his body and enters into one of his relatives, should any be present, but finding none of them in the room, it goes up into the butter, which is then taken down and buried. In some parts of Galway this is said to keep off the disease only for a term of seven years. On asking how long the friends remained outside, my informant replied, "They stay out till he's dead—and well dead."

From Jeremiah Curtin, of the Bureau of Ethnology, I learn that a somewhat similar practice formerly existed in Vermont, where within living memory the dead body of a consumptive was dug up, and the heart taken out and buried, under the impression that this would prevent the recurrence of the disease in the family. Among the Jews, also, the nearest relatives leave the house just before the death struggle comes on.

As soon as life is found to be extinct the neighbor women take charge of the body, which is washed and dressed and stretched upon a board resting on a table or the backs of chairs. The corpse is generally dressed in a shroud, together with the scapular or other insignia of any religious order of which the deceased may have been a member. The shroud, towels and other clothes used in connection with the funeral ceremonies are all of linen and are commonly preserved in each family for this purpose alone. After the funeral the towels, etc., are washed by the nearest female relatives of the deceased, no indigo being used in the process. The corpse is laid out facing the east, or rather the south-east, that is, with the head to the west and the feet to the east, and is buried in the same position whenever possible. The custom of burying the dead facing the east is common to many European and Oriental peoples, having also been practiced formerly by the Choctaws and other Indian tribes of the Southern States,* and had its origin in sun worship. The Irish explain it by saying that the east or south-east is holy, while the evil spirits always come from the north—and here again we see the remains of the old element worship which regarded the rising sun, the warm southern breeze and the cold northern blast as good or bad spirits according to their effects. In allusion to this custom there is a current saying in Connemara, when one person quarrels with another, *Nar bud fada go d-tí'n ceann caol siar d'uit*,† "May it not be long until the little end of you is to the west." In the east they say, "May I live to see you stretched on the board."

Two evil spirits known as the *Máistínid Mór* (*Mawshchenee Moer*) or Great Mastiffs are constantly waiting to seize the soul before it can reach the judgment bar of God. They are asleep, but spring up at the first sound of grief. For this reason the corpse is laid out as soon as possible, and no cry or lamentation is raised, *in theory*, for three hours after death, by

* James Adair, *Hist. Am. Inds.*, 182, 1775.

† Pronounced, *Nawr bá fódha gá jee'n can cuel sheer ghueeth*.

which time the soul stands in the presence of its Maker and is safe for the time being. It is there weighd in the scales of the Archangel Michael and receiv's its sentence of reward or punishment according to the measure of its iniquity. The belief that the souls of the dead ar weighd by the angel Michael prevails all over Europe, and is noted in one of Ralston's Russian Fairy Tales. The idea comes down to us from remote antiquity. At the ruins of Monasterboice abbey, near Drogheda, founded in the sixth century, is a sculpture representing the judgment, in which one figure is weighing the souls in a balance,* and precisely the same thing is portrayed on a Japanese picture of the judgment, recently exhibited in Washington, the original of which dates back for centuries. Should its load of sin carry the soul to the bottom of the scale, the *Máistínid* seiz it and drag it down into hel. There seems also to be an indistinct belief, common to many primitiv peoples, that the soul hovers near the body until the latter is finally laid at rest in the grave. As the *Máistínid* ar particularly alert just before daybreak, great care is taken that there shal be no crying at that time during the few days intervening between death and burial, and one of the most dreaded maledictions in the west of Ireland is *Sgreada na maid'ne ort*,† "The cry of the morning on you!" In some districts, according to Lady Wilde, "when a death was expected it was usual to have a good deal of bread ready baked in the house in order that the evil spirits might be employed eating it, and so let the soul of the dying depart in peace."‡

The manner of laying out the corpse preparatory to the wake differs somewhat in various districts, but the principal details are the same. In Meath the body was placed upon a board frame like a door, which rested upon a table, but was somewhat wider than it, so as to project beyond it on the right side. The frame and table ar coverd with a white sheet reaching down to the floor. The body, drest in its shroud, is extended upon this sheet, with the feet toward the east, being placed upon that part of the frame resting immediately upon the table. Another sheet is thrown over the corpse so as to conceal it from view. Along the projecting edge of the frame ar placed several plates containing pipes and tobacco for the watchers and attendants at the wake. In this part of the country the plate was never placed at the head, foot or upon the breast of the corpse. Between the plates ar large blessed candles, which ar lighted and kept constantly burning as long as the corpse is in the hous, the rule being to keep the body for two nights and bury it on the third day. During all this time the body is never left alone, but is watchd day and night by friends of the deceasd, of about the same age, the men sitting up all night until reliev'd by the women in the morning. In some districts the body of an adult is sometimes adorn'd with black ribbons, that of an unmarried person with white ribbons and that of a child with flowers. In

*.W. R. Wilde, *The Boyne and the Blackwater*, 2d ed., 303, Dublin, 1850.

† Pronounced, *Shgrádha na mōnya urth*.

‡ *Ancient Legends of Ireland*, ii, 118, London, 1887.

the west and some parts of the north the plate of tobacco is placed upon the breast of the corpse. According to Hall,* a quantity of salt is usually placed upon it also. I have not met with this practice, but in Connemara those who attend the wake or funeral put some salt into their pockets before leaving home, and take some in their mouths before eating anything on their return. Salt is believed to keep spirits at a distance, and the spirit in this instance seems to be the ghost of the deceased. In Scotland a plate of salt was formerly placed upon the corpse, the purpose being to keep the devil from disturbing the body.† In Ireland, as elsewhere, there are many curious beliefs in regard to salt. In Cork the tobacco and pipes are placed just above the feet of the corpse, while in Antrim they are placed on a separate table. The corpse thus laid out is said to be *os cionn cláir* (*os cin clawr*) or "over board." In Carleton's account of the old wake ceremonies in some of the northern counties he says that the corpse is sometimes laid out *under* a deal board (under board) with a sheet thrown over the body so as to conceal it, or is sometimes allowed to rest in the bed, with the face uncovered, while sheets with crosses upon them are pinned up about the bed on all sides excepting in front.‡ He also refers in another place to a curious belief of whose existence in Ireland I have no further knowledge, altho it is common to many uncivilized tribes, viz.: That if the corpse be buried with the feet tied the spirit will be hindered in its movements in the next world.§ If there be a clock in the house, it is stopped until after the funeral, a custom observed also in Scotland. Should the corpse remain "lumber" (limber) after laying out, there will soon be another funeral in the family.

THE WAKE AND CAOINE.

We now come to the Wake, called in Gaelic *tóram* (*thoru*), concerning which most of us have heard so much and yet know so little. There is a prevalent impression among some who should know better that the Irish wake is a mere drinking orgy on the occasion of a funeral, but to the student of human development it appears something very different—a survival of an ancient death rite which is older than history and was once almost as widespread as the human race itself. While the wake, with its curious mingling of grief and hilarity, of wild lamentation and boisterous revelry, seems strangely inconsistent when viewed in the light of our

* Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Hall, *Ireland, Picturesquely Illustrated*, i, 222, n. d., New York, R. Worthington, importer.

† James Napier, *Folk Lore, or Superstitious Beliefs in the West of Scotland*, 60, Paisley, 1879.

‡ Wm. Carleton, "Larry McFarland's Wake," in *Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry*, i, London, 1853. This work—consisting of five volumes in this edition—is invaluable to the student of Irish folk-lore, the more so as it describes customs and beliefs prevalent seventy years ago in eastern Ulster, a part of the country from which they have now almost entirely disappeared. The author was an Irishman by birth and education and thoroughly in sympathy with the people.

§ "The Party Fight and Funeral," *idem*, ii, 113, London, 1853. See also page 244, of this paper.

modern civilization, it would appear perfectly natural and proper to the natives of almost any part of Asia or Polynesia, or to the people of ancient Greece, Rome, Carthage or Egypt.

Among ancient and modern nations the original purpose of the wake, with its games, watching and lighted tapers, appears to have been two-fold: To divert the grief of the survivors and to protect the body from the attacks of evil spirits until it was safely disposed of by cremation or burial. In addition to this it must be remembered that with the peasant class of modern Europe, whose toils are constant and amusements few, a wedding or a funeral affords almost the only opportunity for a friendly gathering of neighbors to break in on the dull monotony of every-day life. Napier, in his work on Scotch folk-lore, describes wake customs similar to those of Ireland and says: "The reasons given for watching the corpse differed in different localities. The practice is still observed, I believe, in some places, but probably now it is more the result of habit—a custom followed without any basis of definite belief, and merely as a mark of respect for the dead; but in former times, and within this century, it was firmly held that if the corpse were not watched the devil would carry off the body, and many stories were current of such an awful result having happened." And again: "The wake in the Highlands during last century was a very common affair. * * * Pennant, in his tour through the Highlands, 1772, says that at a death the friends of the deceased meet with bagpipe or fiddle, when the nearest of kin leads off a melancholy ball, dancing and wailing at the same time, which continues till daybreak and is continued nightly till the interment. This custom is to frighten off or protect the corpse from the attack of wild beasts, and evil spirits from carrying it away."* Whatever we may think of the wake, it is certain that those who take part in it believe they are paying a tribute of respect to the dead, although in former days the intemperate use of liquor, together with the strong factional feeling of the last generation, frequently led to disgraceful scenes, while the whole practice is so incompatible with modern ideas that for years the clergy have made every effort to abolish it entirely.

As soon as the news of the death gets abroad the friends begin to arrive to pay their respects to the deceased. They never enter the house singly, but should one come alone he waits on the outside until joined by one or two others, when they open the door a little way, take off their hats and recite in an undertone the prayers for the dead. Then entering the room, they salute those present, take seats and join in the conversation. As a rule, only near relatives join in the caoine or kneel down to pray by the side of the corpse. The friends arrive all through the day, some coming from long distances, and by nightfall there are as many present as the house can well accommodate. In the ordinary cabin, consisting of but two rooms, the corpse is laid out in the middle of the kitchen, while seats are arranged

* James Napier, *Folk Lore or Superstitious Beliefs in the West of Scotland*, 62, 65-6, Paisley, 1879.

around the wall for the visitors. When the hous has several rooms the company assembles in one, leaving the corpse to be guarded by a few watchers in another room, and if there be a barn close at hand the young folks usually adjourn to it early in the evening in order to enjoy themselves without interruption. The men, and frequently the women as wel, help themselves to the pipes and tobacco, and in the old times whisky was also servd out at intervals to the entire company. For each pipe of tobacco used the smoker is expected to say a short prayer for the repose of the soul of the dead, the regular Gaelic formula being : *Seac't lán reilic Pad-ruig agus tomba C'ríosd go b'eannac'taib' le h-anam na marb*,* "Seven fuls of the cemetery of Patrick and the tomb of Christ of blessings with the soul of the dead," while the English speakers say, "God hav mercy on the soul of the one this pipe was over."

While the family and the caoiners sit or stand about the corpse the others pass the time in smoking, gossiping, telling stories, singing songs and playing games, all of which seems strangely out of place in the presence of death. At intervals one of the company will say, "Let us repeat a Pater and Ave for the soul of the dead," when all rise and say a short prayer in silence, after which the talk and merriment go on as before. The only other interruption is that occasioned by the caoine, which is raisd when the body is first laid out, and repeated on the entrance of each relativ or near friend.

The custom of a public funeral lament for the dead comes down to us from the earliest times, having been common to all the nations of antiquity, and is stil practiced in India, Arabia, Abyssinia, Australia and among some tribes of the American Indians. Numerous references in the Bible show that it existed among the Hebrews. Homer represents the women as wailing and reciting eulogies over Hector's dead body, and in ancient Rome we find laws in regard to the *præficæ* or mourning women. From J. Owen Dorsey, of the United States Bureau of Ethnology, I hav obtaind a description of a funeral lament which he heard among the Osage Indians, in which the words, the intonation and the motions of the wailers wer exactly similar to what we find in the Irish caoine. According to Francis La Flèche their kindred, the Omahas, hav but one formal lament. Among all nations this duty seems to hav been left to the women, as beneath the dignity of a man.

In Ireland the funeral lament is calld *caoine* (almost *cena*) by the Gaelic speakers, while the corrupted form, *keen*, is used by the rest of the population. The woman who leads the lament is calld the *Bean Caointe* (*ban ceencha*) or "crying woman," and is generally selected for her fine voice and skil in improvising. When she is a near friend of the deceased she givs her services as a labor of love; otherwise she receives a small sum according to the ability of the relativs. It must be rememberd that it requires some special qualifications to lead the caoine properly, and that

*Pronounced *Shókhth lawn rel-yic Fawrig ògus thomba Khreesdh gó vānakhthee lae hōnam na mōraw*'.

every wake necessitates an attendance of several days. In Galway there is a class of women known as knitters, who travel about from place to place knitting stockings, mittens and caps for the peasantry, and from their intimate acquaintance with the life histories of their customers, and their readiness of expression in song or story, they are usually in demand on such occasions.

As soon as the body is laid out the friends kneel down and pray. Then rising, the women range themselves around the corpse, and the Bean Caointe, advancing, stretches out her hands for a moment over the body, and then, lifting them suddenly over her head, breaks out into the wild lament. When she pauses at the end of a stanza, the other women take up the mournful chorus, moving their bodies slowly to and fro and clapping their hands in front of them in keeping with the measure of the chant. Then the Bean Caointe begins another stanza, which is followed by the chorus in the same way, and so on to the close. The caoine is repeated each night about 10 o'clock, each morning soon after daybreak, and on the arrival of any relative who may not have been in at the beginning of the wake. In the latter case the new comer kneels down beside the corpse and recites a short prayer, then rising together with the women he joins them in repeating the cry, after which he takes his place with the rest of the company, who are indulging in jokes and small talk, games and stories during the intervals of the caoine.

As the funeral leaves the house the women form in line behind the coffin and the caoine is raised again, the wailing chorus now swelling loudly upon the breeze and again dying away into silence, until the churchyard is reached. As the coffin is lowered into the grave the cry rises for the last time with all the agony of the final parting, and the excitement for some moments is something awful. In Meath all the women of the neighborhood formerly walked behind the coffin, from three to five abreast, and the cry was raised by those in the first row, then taken up by those in the second, and so on to the last, when those in the front row began again. The cry while walking with the funeral is generally only a wailing chorus. It may be heard to a great distance and long before the funeral is in sight. In this county it used to be said of one noted for attending wakes, "You're as fond of a funeral as Denning's dog." Denning lived in Navan and owned a dog which used to jump up whenever he heard the cry and follow the funeral until it reached the churchyard. In Connemara there is no caoine during the procession. In Kerry one-half the women walk in front of the coffin while the others come after it, and the caoine is raised alternately by each party. In the north also the women frequently walk in front.

The impression made by the caoine, with the passionate eulogy of the Bean Caointe and the wailing chorus of the women, is thus described by competent witnesses: "The Irish language, bold, forcible and comprehensive, full of the most striking epithets and idiomatic beauties, is peculiarly adapted for either praise or satire—its blessings are singularly touch-

ing and expressive, and its curses wonderfully strong, bitter and biting. The rapidity and ease with which both are uttered, and the epigrammatic force of each concluding stanza of the keen, generally bring tears to the eyes of the most indifferent spectator, or produce a state of terrible excitement. The dramatic effect of the scene is very powerful: the darkness of the death-chamber, illumined only by candles that glare upon the corpse—the manner of repetition or acknowledgment that runs round when the keener gives out a sentence—the deep yet suppressed sobs of the nearer relatives—and the stormy, uncontrollable cry of the widow or bereaved husband, when allusion is made to the domestic virtues of the deceased—all heighten the effect of the keen; but in the open air, winding round some mountain pass, when a priest or person greatly beloved and respected is carried to the grave, and the keen, swelled by a thousand voices, is borne upon the mountain echoes—it is then absolutely magnificent.”*

The music of the caoine has its traditional origin in the wail of the Bean-sighe, and in the manuscript Book of Ballymote there is an ancient funeral lament which is recorded as having been sung by a chorus of invisible spirits over the grave of an Irish king in the tenth century.† With regard to the subject matter of the caoine it is difficult to say much, or to give specimens, as the principal part is usually improvised on the spot and forgotten with the occasion which called it forth. It is recited in a measured chant, each line ending in a crescendo, dying away at the beginning of the next. The wailing chorus is a long tremulous *ochón*, *ochón eile*, *ullulu* or *ullagón*. In Connemara the criers use *ochón*, *ochón eile*, *ochón eile* (*okhoèn ella*), while in the south *ullagón* is more common and may be a corruption of the same expression. *Ochón* is the Gaelic equivalent for *alas!* and *eile* signifies *another*, so that *ochon*, *ochon eile*, may be rendered, “Alas, and again alas!” The stanzas are composed the more readily from the fact that Gaelic rhymes are vocalic only, and it is sufficient that the final vowel sounds of corresponding lines be the same.

The caoine itself strikingly resembles the Indian death song. It is a lament for the dead in which the speaker eulogizes the virtues of the deceased and makes touching allusion to little incidents in his history, and should it be the case that he has come to his death by violence, as has happened too often in the troubled condition of the country, the most withering curses are called down upon the head of the slayer. We give here specimens of caoines which have been preserved among the people, but as before remarked the great majority are forgotten almost as soon as uttered. There are, however, numerous elegies of more finished composition, written by Gaelic poets within comparatively modern times, which are well known in the districts of the south and west where the language is still commonly spoken. The first is given in Hall's Ireland as the literal translation of a

* Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Hall, Ireland: Picturesquely Illustrated, i, 225, n. d., New York.

† Idem, ii, 408 note.

caoine stil preservd in Antrim. It is said to hav been composd by a daughter of the O'Neils over the body of a former lover, who, having gon to some foreign land, returnd after a long absence, only to find that she had yielded to the persuasions of her relativs and was about to become the bride of another. The news struck him down like a blow and the girl did not long survive the shock :

"My love, my love, and my treasure,
Many a day have you and I spent
Beneath the shade of yonder tree,
Thy fair head on my lap.
Sweetly didst thou kiss me ;
And it was not a kiss without love
That thou didst press upon my lips :
But woe is me ! women believe not men,
There is so much deceit and falsehood.

"My love, my love, and my treasure,
Did I but know then
Half what I do know now,
I would plough with thee the hills,
I would swim with thee the seas,
Though my kindred might upbraid me :
But what were that to me,
If he who loved me were mine?

"Beloved of my bosom,
Thy heart found no repose,
When my story was told thee
That I was the bride of another—
Yet Heaven knows, the only Son knows,
That I would prefer thee
To all the gold of Erin—
To young oxen on the hills,
And to him with all his herds.
And the only Son knows
That I will never lay beside him
My right side nor my left."*

The next, from Kerry, was obtained from an old man who is one of the few having a literary acquaintance with the Gaelic. It is the lament of a woman over the body of her son's wife :

*Bud' d'eas liom a t-seasam' t'u agus bud' d'eas liom a t-suid'e t'u,
'S bud' g'eal-dearg air m'argad' an rig'e d'uit,
A díol do c'uid t'orrt'a 's a glacad' do c'íosa.
Nuair-a t'ainic tu a b'aile níor t'roid agus níor bruid'ean duit,
Ac't breit' air do leanb' agus é c'asad' er a c'in c'ugad—Ullagón !*

*Is minic-a c'onnarcsa bean mic agus mat'air céile
Mar b'eid'ead' cat agus luc' air ag'aid' a c'éile ;
Ní mar súd-a b'id'innse agus mo c'eud-searc.
Do b'í ár d-toil do g'ul a c'éile ;
Do b'í ár n-daonnac't ag imeac't a n-aonac't.
'Sé mo cruad'tan oir luat'ad' eugais
Go d-teic' do t'uarasg air fad na h-Éireann !—Ullagón !*

* Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Hall, Ireland, Picturesquely Illustrated, iii, 113, n. d., New York.

*Is mait a tá f'ios agamsa an lá t'asduig'ead tu uaimse—
 Lá na cuiginne brisead agus do b'uailead*,
 Lán líon a c'uir a g'críoc go luat d'am,
 Lá na bairg'eana léat'ad agus do s'uait'ead*,
 Lá mo c'uid eudaig néatac t'uarad*,
 Agus lá mo b'áis mo 'cán cruad t'u!—Ullagón!**

Which may be thus rendered :

You wer beautiful to me standing and you wer beautiful to me sitting,
 And you wer fair and rosy in the king's market,
 When selling your produce and receiving your rents.
 When you came home you wer not fighting and quarreling
 But taking your child and turning it on your bosom.—Ullagón !

Often hav I seen the son's wife and the mother-in-law
 Eying each other as a cat watches a mous ;
 Not thus was I and my Hundred Loves.
 Our desires were in unison ;
 Our bounty went together.
 My sorrow that you hav died so soon,
 Before your fame had gon through the length of Ireland ! Ullagón !

Wel I know the day I shal want you !
 The day of the churning, to break and to beat (the cream) ;
 The day of the flax, to prepare it speedily for me ;
 The day of the cake, spreading and kneading it ;
 The day of my clothing,† neatly bleaching it—
 And the day of my death my hard sigh wil be for you ! Ullagón !

THE WAKE GAMES.

We come now to a very different phase of the wake ceremonies—the games indulged in by the younger portion of the company. Funeral games and feasts wer known to the Greeks and other nations of antiquity,

* Pronounced in Kerry :

*Bũ yās lum a chāsaw' hu ōgus bũ yās lum a thee hu,
 Sbũ yol-dhārag er wōrag'a'n ree ghuih,
 A dheel dhō khuij āra 'sa glōca dhō khyeesa.
 Nur-a hānic thu a wōla neer hrēj ōgus neer breen duith,
 Ōkh braeh er dhō lānaw' ōgus ae khōsa er a khyeen ghudh.*

*Iss minic'a khūnicsa ban mic ōgus mawhar caela
 Mur vy' ūkh coth ōgus lūkh er aeg a khyaela ;
 Ne mur shoodh-a veensha ōgus mō khyaedh-shorc.
 Dhō veeh awr dhel dhō ghul a khaela ;
 Dhō veeh awr nan-yakh ag imakhth a naenakhth.
 Shae mō khruathan er luaha aegish
 Gō jaekh dhō huarasg er fūdth na Haeran !*

*Iss mōh a thaw's ōgamsa an law hasthoe thu wimsha—
 Law na cuiginya, brisha ōgus dhō woala,
 Law'n leen, a khuir a greeh gō lua ghum,
 Law na bōréna lāha ōgus dhō huha,
 Law mō khuij aedhig naetha huara,
 Ōgus law mō wawsh mō 'khawn crua hu.*

† The day when the newly-woven linen is spread out to bleach.

among whom they partook of a religious character and wer intended to dispel the grief for the dead from the minds of the living. There is evidence that such was their original nature and intent in Ireland also, but Christianity and advancing civilization hav degraded the wake games, along with other lingering pagan ceremonies, from their former high estate, until they ar now little more than the rough sports of overgrown children. They hav degenerated greatly even during the last half century, and it might be safe to say that they wil soon disappear entirely had not the same thing been predicted by every writer on the subject for the last hundred years.

Lady Wilde gives an account of some games of a dramatic character which wer enacted at a wake in the south of Ireland some fifty years ago. Altho supposed to be related by an old man who was present on the occasion, it is evident that the language is not his own. It is also proper to state that the poetic fancy of the author is continually detecting a symbolic significance in things which appear very commonplace to ordinary mortals. As the games described seem to be entirely unknown to the present generation, we quote that portion in ful :

“ When a great space was cleared in the centre of the barn, the first set of players entered. They wore masks and fantastic garments, and each carried a long spear and a bit of plaited straw on the arm for a shield. At once they began to build a fort, as it were, marking out the size with their spears, and using some rough play with the spectators. While thus engaged a band of enemies appeared, also masked and armed. And now a great fight began and many prisoners were taken ; but to save slaughter a horn was blown and a fight demanded between the two best champions of the hostile forces. Two of the finest young men were then selected and placed at opposite ends of the barn, when they ran a tilt against one another with their spears, uttering fierce, loud cries and making terrible demonstrations. At length one fell down as if mortally wounded ; then all the hooded women came in again and keened over him, a male voice at intervals reciting his deeds, while the pipers played martial tunes. But on its being suggested that perhaps he was not dead at all, an herb doctor was sent for to look at him ; and an aged man with flowing white beard was led in, carrying a huge bundle of herbs. With these he performed sundry strange incantations, until finally the dead man sat up and was carried off the field by his comrades with shouts of triumph. So ended the first play.

“ Then supper was served and more whisky drunk, after which another play was acted of a different kind. A table was set in the middle of the barn, and two chairs, while all the people, about a hundred or more, gathered round in a circle. Then two men, dressed as judges, took their seats with guards beside them, and called on another man to come forth and address the people. On this a young man sprang on the table and poured forth an oration in Irish, full of the most grotesque fun and sharp allusions, at which the crowd roared with laughter. Then he gave out a

verse like a psalm in gibberish Irish and bade the people say it after him. It ran like this, being translated :

Yellow Macaully has come from Spain,
He brought sweet music out of a bag,
Singing *See-saw, Sulla Vick Dhau,*
*Sulla, Sulla Vick Dhau righ.**

"If any one failed to repeat this verse after him he was ordered to prison by the judges, and the guards seized him to cut off his head ; or if any one laughed the judge sentenced him, saying in Irish, 'Seize that man, he is a pagan ; he is mocking the Christian faith. Let him die !' "†

Another of these dramatic performances, which seems also to be unknown at present, is thus described by the same author : "The Hierophant (*sic*) or teacher of the games, orders all the men out of the room ; a young girl is then dressed with a hide thrown over her and horns on her head, to simulate a cow, while her maidens form a circle and slowly dance round her to music, on which a loud knocking is heard at the door. 'Who wants to enter?' asks the Hierophant. He is answered, 'The guards demand admittance for the bull who is without.' Admittance is refused, and the maidens and the cow affect great alarm. Still the knocking goes on, and finally the door is burst open and the bull enters. He is also robed with a hide and wears horns, and is surrounded by a band of young men as his guards. He endeavors to seize the cow, who is defended by her maidens, forming the dramatic incidents of the play. A general mock fight now takes place between the guards and the maidens, and the scene ends with uproarious hilarity and the capture of the cow."‡

The modern games are generally simple tests of endurance or agility, rough practical jokes perpetrated upon innocent victims or courting games resembling "forfeits." It is a common thing for some active young fellow to open the proceedings by jumping up, throwing off his coat and climbing hand over hand along the rafter to the highest point of the roof and down to the wall on the other side in the same way. This is at once accepted as a challenge by every athletic young man present and for a few minutes they are swarming along the rafters like so many monkeys.

Then come tests of endurance, in which the young men of two parishes or townlands are generally ranged against each other. In one of these known as *Bróigín* (Brogeen), "The Slipper," one man kneels down with his open hand held out in front of him, while another stands over him with a short piece of rope or a knotted handkerchief, which is sometimes dipped in water so as to give a more stinging blow. Bracing himself firmly, he brings the rope down with all his force on the open palm of the kneeler, who endeavors to grasp it as it strikes him, and must endure the blows until he succeeds, when it is his turn to inflict the same punishment upon some one of the opposite party. This is the play described by Carleton

* Properly (Genitive case), *Solomon, M'ic Dáib'i rig*; "Solomon, son of King David."

† Lady Wilde, *Ancient Legends of Ireland*, i, 229-231, London, 1887.

‡ Idem, 233.

under the name of "Standing Brogue," in which one man stands up with his hands, locked together, hanging down in front of him, and tries to catch between them the brogue or slipper with which he is struck by the other.

Another game of the same character is called in the west *Cloif air Bas* (*clif er būs*) or "Blow on the Hand" and is also described by Carleton,* as formerly played in the north, under the name of *Hotloof*, which is probably derived from the Gaelic term. There are several forms of the game. In one the victim leans over with his open hand, palm upward, resting behind him on his hip. One of the other side then steps up and strikes the open palm with his fist, sometimes with such force as to disable the sufferer for the rest of the night. Any flinching would bring disgrace upon the side to which the coward belonged, but the striker is at once challenged by some champion of the opposing party and must submit to the same infliction, which is given with all the force that can be put into the blow. No exhibition of ill-temper is allowed and anyone who should get angry would have to deal with the whole party. At many of these gatherings there are persons regularly selected to preserve the peace.

In another form of the game the players stand in a line, those of opposing sides alternating, each one with his left arm in front of his face, and the open hand resting, palm out, over his right ear. The first then gives his neighbor a stinging slap on the open palm, sometimes with sufficient force to send him spinning into the middle of the room. Number two does the same for number three, and so on to the last, who wreaks his vengeance upon number one.

Another game, also called *Bróigín*, is sometimes known in the east as "The Slipper" and is mentioned by Carleton under the name of "Sitting Brogue." In this, one man stands in the middle while the others sit in a circle around him and, keeping their hands behind them, or under their drawn-up knees, pass a shoe or slipper rapidly from one to another. While he endeavors to find which one has the shoe some one will strike him with it from behind, but when he wheels quickly around he finds all holding up their hands innocently in front. He must continue his search until he hits upon the right one, who then takes his place in the ring. This game is described by Goldsmith in the *Vicar of Wakefield* as played at a social gathering, and as the author was himself an Irishman it is probable that he first saw it enacted at an Irish wake. It is also known as *Haire-Haire* (*Horra-Horra*), from an exclamation used by the players to distract the attention of the one in the centre. Plays of this nature, together with the various forfeit games, are engaged in by young men and girls alike. It is hardly necessary to state that men alone take part in the tests of endurance already described.

In another game, known in the west as *Fag'aill Ceird* (*Fawlch Cierch*) or "Getting a Trade," one man personates a tailor, shoemaker or some other

* All the wake games described by Wm. Carleton are mentioned in "Larry McFarland's Wake," in his *Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry*, i, London, 1853.

tradesman, and selects two others as assistants. The candidates for apprenticeship, who are always sure to be persons unacquainted with the game, are then sent out of the house, the door being fastened after them. A rope is next thrown over a rafter near the door, and a running noose fixed at one end, while one of the assistants holds the other. The employer then opens the door on a crack and, putting his head out, announces to those outside that he is in want of an apprentice to learn the trade. It is always a point to keep the applicants outside until they are tired waiting, and if it be a cold night in winter they are generally glad to get back into the house on any terms by the time the door is opened. A candidate steps up to offer his services and is allowed to squeeze through the doorway, which is at once closed behind him. His employer then advances as if to shake hands; instead of which he slips the noose over the wrist of the apprentice, when one assistant, with a sudden haul on the other end of the rope, quickly pulls the arm of the victim to a perpendicular above his head, while the other helper, grasping his free arm with one hand, pours a stream of cold water down the uplifted sleeve on the other arm. In spite of his surprise at such treatment the victim is pretty sure to make no outcry which would give the alarm to those outside, and he takes his place in a warm corner to look on with grim satisfaction as they enter one by one to receive the same dose. They have their revenge at the end, however, when the door is thrown open and the employer and his assistants run for their lives into the darkness over fields and ditches, pursued by the outraged apprentices, who have full permission to pound and pinch them to their heart's content if they can catch them.

In another game of this kind the employer asks each one what wages he requires and when payment must be made. The servant may demand, for instance, "Ten pounds, twice a year," that is, ten pounds in two half-yearly instalments. When all have been hired they are sent outside and admitted one at a time to receive their pay. The two assistants then hold the hired man in a stooping position while the employer proceeds to pay him his wages by sticking him with a pin according to the number of instalments agreed upon. A light stick is sometimes used to drive home the pin, and if the victim be an unpopular character his salary is raised with a surprising liberality.

Another game is called *Cleas a T-soipín* (*clās a thēpeen*) or "Game of the Wisp." In this two young fellows assume the character of lovers, one being dressed as a woman, while both are fantastically decked out with wisps of straw along their arms and about their heads so as to conceal the features. As soon as they enter the room the lover espies the girl and makes toward her, while she retreats to one of the benches occupied by the company. He follows and attempts to sit down beside her, when she pushes him away, and in the scuffle the occupants of the bench are generally landed in a heap on the floor. She escapes to the other side of the room and the same scene is re-enacted. Throughout this rough courtship the presence of the company is totally ignored and they climb over benches

and overturn stools in apparent unconsciousness of the fact that these are occupied. Finally some one produces a broom, which is laid upon the floor, when the lovers jump over it and are then pronounced man and wife. This, by the way, is familiarly known as a tinker's wedding. The honeymoon lasts about two minutes, when there is a family quarrel, and the wife brings down the broom over the shoulders of her husband, who takes refuge behind one of the benches, followed by his enraged partner, who rains down blows alike on the just and on the unjust, so that there is a general scattering until she finally chases him out of the room.

In *Ceannach na G-caora* (*cānakh na gera*) or "The Purchase of the Sheep" the "sheep" sit down in a row on the floor, one behind another, each one with his feet projecting beyond the one in front, who holds them firmly against his side. The owner of the sheep then enters accompanied by the prospective buyer, who carries a stout stick. The purchaser proceeds to examine the sheep to see if they are sound, which he does by tapping them on the head with the stick and blowing into their eyes, while he judges of the quality of the wool by pulling out liberal handfuls of hair. Those who are posted on the game are let off easily, but the others, especially any who are disliked by the crowd, pay dearly for the fun, while all the struggles of the victim are ineffectual because his feet are held by his neighbor. At last having bought the sheep the purchaser brands them by drawing a line of soot over their faces, but for fear that should rub off he puts his earmarks upon them by pinching their ears in an instrument of torture made by breaking the stick nearly in two in the middle until the two parts close back upon each other like a hinge. The buyer then discovers that he has not money enough and asks some one to "bail" him. Should any looker-on be so innocent as to volunteer his help, he is seized and held while the creditor exacts payment with a stick or a pin according to the amount of the debt. Finally the victims are released and chase their tormentors over the fields, as already described.

Another game, known in the east as "Priest of the Parish," is known also in the west under the Gaelic equivalent *Sagart a P'arráiste* (*Sōgarth a Frawshcha*), but as the formula in both cases is in English, the game is probably of late introduction in the west and may be of foreign origin altogether. The "priest" sometimes puts on a wig or a gown of some kind to add dignity to his appearance. Another of the players is called "Man Jack," while the rest take such names as White Cap, Black Cap, Blue Cap, Cabbage Cap, and so on. On entering the room the priest stands before the players and recites the formula :

"I'm the priest of the parish,
That lost my 'sidherin'* cap—
Some say this and some say that,
But I say my Man Jack."

Man Jack instantly asks, "What, me, sir?"

"Yes, you, sir."

* Considering.

"You're a liar, sir."

"Who then, sir?"

"Black Cap, sir."

And unless Black Cap at once calls out "What me, sir?" and so on, he suffers the penalty, which is usually a daub of soot on his face or a smart slap on the cheek. This game is described also by Carleton. The marking with soot occurs in some Scandinavian children's games, and also among the Greenland Eskimo, who may have taken it from their Norse neighbors.*

In another game known in Galway as *Dam'sa na G-coinnínid*, the "Dance of the Rabbits," the players hop about the room in a stooping position singing:

Dam'sa na g-coinnínid,
Gard'ad' a h-corna,—
A coinnín is oige
B'ris sé a c'os.†

"The dance of the rabbits
In the garden of barley—
The youngest rabbit,
He broke his leg."

The one who first trips and falls is the unfortunate "youngest rabbit."

Lady Wilde mentions a play called *Hold the Light*, "where the passion of the Lord Christ is travestied with grotesque imitation" and another known as the *Building of the Ship*, in which she sees "a symbolic rite still older than Druidism and probably a remnant of the primitive Arkite worship." She goes on to say that "It was against these two plays that the anathemas of the Church were chiefly directed, in consequence of their gross immorality, and they have now entirely ceased to form any portion of the wake ceremonial of Ireland. Hindu priests would recognize some of the ceremonies as the same which are still practised in their own temples; and travelers have traced a similarity also in these ancient usages to the 'big canoe games' of the Mandan Indians."‡ With regard to the first mentioned play I know nothing. Of the other, known in Gaelic as *Gleus Loinge*, "Dressing of the Ship," or *Cuiread' Crann air a Long*,§ "Putting a Mast on the Ship," it may be briefly stated that the so-called symbolic rite is simply a coarse practical joke at the expense of some innocent victim, and so far is it from being extinct that my information concerning it was obtained from a young man who witnessed its performance at a wake at about the very time the lines above quoted were written and almost within sight of the author's mansion in Mayo.

There are several marrying games known as *Marrying*, *Frimsy Framsy*, the *Tinker's Marriage*, etc. In each of these the master of ceremonies, who is usually fixed up to represent a priest, calls out from the company

* E. B. Tylor, *Old Scandinavian Civilization among the Modern Esquimaux*, Jour. Anth. Inst., xiii, 354, London, 1884.

† Pronounced, *Dhaw'sa na gūneenee,*
Gōru a h'yoerna,
A cūneen iss oiga
Vrish shae a khus.

‡ Lady Wilde, *Ancient Legends of Ireland*, i, 232, London, 1887.

§ Pronounced, *Glaes Linga* and *Cūru Crawn er a Lung*.

some young man or woman, who is told to choos a partner of the opposit sex. The person thus designated comes or is brought up to the first one calld out, when the priest recites a mock marriage service over the pair, after which the husband kisses his bride, in which he is followd by the minister. Another couple is then brought out in the same way, and so the game goes on. In one of these plays the question put to the first one calld, who is generally a girl, is, "Fair maid, Frimsy Framsy, who's your fancy?" In another the formula is, "Daughter, daughter, choos your partner."

The descriptions of the following games ar taken from Carleton's work already referd to, quotations being given without the dialect. In *Weds or Forfeits*, also called *Putting Round the Button*, the master of ceremonies receivs from each player some forfeit, a pocket knife, handkerchief or something of that kind. Each one stoops in turn while the leader holds a forfeit over his (or her) head and bids him name the penalty by which the owner may redeem the property. The owner is generally commanded to sing a song, to kis some boy or girl of the company, or perhaps to carry some old man three times around the room, and it is a great point in the game to compel a coquettish girl or a roguish young fellow to kis some toothless old man or withered-up grandmother in the company.

Another is calld *Horns* or *The Painter*. The players form a ring about the leader, who sits in the centre with his two forefingers extended upon his knees. He begins, "Horns, horns, cow horns!" and raises his fingers with a jerk high above his head. Every one in the room must instantly do the same, because the animal named has horns. He begins again, "Horns, horns, goat horns!" and up go all the fingers again, because a goat also has horns. He goes on, "Horns, horns, horse horns!" and raises his fingers as before, but wo to the unlucky one in the circle who lifts a forefinger, for a horse has no horns, and the penalty for his carelessness is a stroke of soot across his cheek. The game requires quickness of thought and action, and as may easily be seen it occasions much sport.

In *The Silly Old Man* the one who personates that character stands in the middle of the floor, while the others, boys and girls alternately, join hands in a circle about him and begin to sing :

Here's a silly old man that lies all alone,
That lies all alone, that lies all alone;
Here's a silly old man that lies all alone,
He wants a wife and he can get none.

The silly old man must then select a wife from one of the girls in the ring. The one chosen enters the circle along with him while the others sing :

Now, young couple, you're married together,
You're married together, you're married together,
You must obey your father and mother,
And love one another like sister and brother—
I pray, young couple, you'll kiss together.

And there is seldom any objection raisd in regard to this part of the

ceremony. It may be remarkd, in parenthesis, that, with an Irishman, none rhymes with alone, while again rhymes with remain.

The *White Cockade* brings up to memory one of the most dramatic events in the sad history of Ireland, when, after the fall of Limerick in 1691, its heroic defenders, abandond by the cowardly James II, and disappointed in their hopes of French assistance, spurnd the profferd service in the army of the conqueror, and almost the entire body of fourteen thousand of the flower of Irish manhood turnd their backs on their nativ land forever to follow the white cockade of the kings of France. The game is thus described by Carleton: "The man that leads the sports places them all on their seats—gets from some of the girls a white handkerchief, which he ties round his hat as you would tie a piece of mourning. He then walks round them two or three times, singing:

Will you list and come with me, fair maid?
Will you list and come with me, fair maid?
Will you list and come with me, fair maid?
And follow the lad with the white cockade?

When he sings this he takes off his hat and puts it on the head of the girl he likes best, who rises up and puts her arm round him, and then both go about in the same way, singing the same words. She then puts the hat on some young man, who gets up and goes round with them, singing as before. *He* next puts it on the girl *he* loves best, who, after singing and going round in the same manner, puts it on another, and *he* on *his* sweetheart, and so on. This is called the *White Cockade*. When it's all over, that is, when every young man has pitched upon the girl that he wishes to be his sweetheart they sit down and sing songs and court, as they did at the marrying."*

Investigation would probably show that some of these games wer brought over from the neighboring island by the Scotch and English settlers in the north. While the young folks ar indulging in such plays the older ones look on or pass the time in singing and telling stories. It was formerly considered an honor to be known as "a great hand at a wake," but the tendency of late years is to eliminate the more boisterous features and to confine the proceedings to the less noisy games and to story-telling. Of course the immediate friends of the deceasd do not join in the merriment, but they ar sometimes compeld to laugh in spite of themselvs, even through their tears, and, as before stated, the original purpose of funeral games seems to hav been to banish the grief of the survivors. All this does not argue an unfeeling nature. On the contrary, the sorrow is deep in their hearts, for Irish affection is strong and constant, and outlasts life itself, as is shown by the fact that second marriages ar universally abhord and almost unknown in Ireland.

No one should take a child in his arms after being at a wake, without

* Wm. Carleton, "Larry M'Farland's Wake," in *Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry*, i, 258-9, London, 1853.

first dipping his hands into holy water; neither should any one visit a sick person on coming from a wake.*

THE FUNERAL PROCESSION AND BURIAL.

The wake generally continues until the morning of the third day, when the friends make the final preparations for the funeral. Until of late years the priest rarely attended the funeral or was present at the burial, but it was customary to celebrate a requiem mass, known as the "month's mind," at the house of the deceased one month after the death. Another, known as the "year's mind," was sometimes celebrated in the chapel on the first anniversary. It is a matter of congratulation if the funeral occur upon a Sunday, as that is the day upon which Christ ascended into heaven, and a shower is accepted as a sign that the fires of purgatory will soon be quenched for the soul. A saying, quoted by Napier, indicates the existence of a similar belief in Scotland.† On the other hand, it is unlucky to dig the grave on Monday, probably because the week would be unfortunate if begun in such a manner. The corpse is not put into the coffin until the procession is about to start, when the friends kiss the face for the last time and the lid is then fastened down, holy water being frequently sprinkled upon the coffin and attendants at the same time. In some parts the coffin is then brought out and placed on chairs outside the door, while the candles which have been kept constantly burning about the corpse are ranged on other chairs around the coffin and remain so until the procession begins to move. Should the corpse be that of husband or wife, the friends of either party frequently endeavor, as soon as the coffin has been taken out, to overturn the table or chairs upon which the body rested, in order that the next death may be among the relatives on the other side of the family, and this has sometimes occasioned a struggle even in the house of death. Instances of this practice have occurred in Washington. The lid must not be nailed on the coffin of a new-born child, or, according to Lady Wilde, the mother who bore it will never have another.

In districts where hearses have not yet come into use the coffin is carried on a bier or on poles supported on the shoulders of four or six men. In some districts of Ulster, according to Carleton, the bearers formerly kept their arms hanging down in front, with the end of the pole resting upon the breast, until the churchyard was reached, when the near relatives took the coffin upon the shoulders and made the circuit in the ordinary way.‡

It is always carried with the feet of the corpse to the front, and when set down at any time before or after reaching the churchyard the face is always toward the east. The bearers are relieved at intervals, all the men in attendance usually assisting by turns, as this is considered a mark of

* Lady Wilde, *Ancient Legends of Ireland*, ii, 119, London, 1887.

† James Napier, *Folk Lore or Superstitious Beliefs in the West of Scotland*, 65, Paisley, 1879.

‡ Wm. Carleton, "The Party Fight and Funeral," in *Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry*, ii, 114 and 126, London, 1853.

respect to the dead. In Connemara the one who carries in front must, when reliev'd, take the place of the one behind him, and so on with the others, so that after the first start each man takes a turn at both front and back. In other parts of the country all the bearers are reliev'd at the same time. Should a man fall while carrying the coffin he will die within a year. If there be several ways of reaching the churchyard the longest road is always chosen, as it is thought disrespectful to the dead to take a short cut. No one should look at the passing funeral from the threshold or through the window, but must stand in the middle of the room or outside the door until the procession has gone by. Any person violating this rule runs the risk of being the next corpse, as does also the one who should attempt to cross in front of the procession. It is also unlucky to let a corpse fall to the ground, or to meet a man on a white horse while going with a funeral. Any one coming from the opposite direction will turn back and take *Trí Coismóid na Trócaire*,* "three steps of mercy," with the funeral. In some parts it is customary, on coming to a crossroad, to halt for a moment and offer up a prayer for the deceased, a practice which formerly existed also in Wales.† In some parts of Ulster it is customary to set the coffin down for a moment on coming to the boundary of the farm or garden plot upon which the dead man resided and here the caoine is raised again.

While the procession thus moves on toward the churchyard the women raise the caoine as already described. In the neighborhood of Ballybunion, Kerry, the men, instead of the women, raise the caoine while passing through a town, if the deceased was a man of special worth or promise. The reason given for this custom throws a curious light upon some other Irish beliefs: In the old days, when a young man fell in love with a girl whose parents objected to him he raised his faction and carried her off by force without waiting to get her consent. On one occasion a young lover, with the help of his friends, had thus seized a girl about midnight and was bearing her away to his own district, holding her in front of him on the horse, "because he wouldn't trust her behind him." As they galloped through a town she screamed out for help, when the men instantly raised a caoine to drown her voice. The people who were awakened by her screams heard the caoine and supposed that it was raised over the corpse of some one who had died in a foreign land and was being taken home by "his good people"—the fairies attached to his family—to be buried in his ancestral cemetery. Through fear of the fairies they kept inside, so that the lover escaped with his bride, and the custom remains to this day to commemorate the event.

In Roscommon, Meath and the north-eastern counties, the caoine is never raised for a child or young unmarried person. Instead of this the young friends of the deceased, of the same sex, prepare what are called "garlands," made by wrapping strips of scalloped white paper in a spiral

* Pronounced *Chree cushmaej na throcara*.

† Pennant, quoted in Jour. Anth. Soc., v, 425, London, 1876.

fashion around light sticks about a yard in length, the scallops pointing upward. These are carried in procession on each side of the coffin, and afterwards driven into the earth above the newly-made grave so as to form two lines with the tops meeting in the centre. From a passage in Carleton* it would seem that in some parts of the north the garlands are fixed upon hoops instead of upon straight sticks.

In several of the larger towns there was formerly an ancient stone cross standing in some prominent place, and around this every funeral procession passing through the town made a circuit. Most of these crosses have long disappeared, but the old custom is still kept up, the circuit being made around the former site. Thus at Navan, in Meath, the procession goes round the market-place, where it is probable a cross once stood,† and a corpse passing through Fethard, in Tipperary, "is always carried round the pump, because the old cross stood there in former times; and there is a certain gate of the same town—for a considerable part of the fortifications remain—through which a corpse is never carried, though in the direct course, because it was through that gate that Cromwell entered the town."‡

A curious observance in connection with the funeral of a murdered person is described by Carleton as formerly existing in the north of Ireland. The custom seems now to be extinct: "In Ireland when a murder is perpetrated, it is usual, as the funeral proceeds to the graveyard, to bring the corpse to the house of him who committed the crime, and lay it down at his door, while the relations of the deceased kneel down and with an appalling solemnity utter the deepest imprecations and invoke the justice of heaven on the head of the murderer. This, however, is usually omitted if the residence of the criminal be completely out of the line of the funeral, but if it be possible, by any circuit, to approach it, this dark ceremony is never omitted. In cases where the crime is doubtful, or unjustly imputed, those who are thus visited come out, and laying their right hand upon the coffin, protest their innocence of the blood of the deceased, calling God to witness the truth of their asseverations; but in cases where the crime is clearly proved against the murderer, the door is either closed, the ceremony repelled by violence, or the house abandoned by the inmates until the funeral passes."§ In the funeral described the mourners wore a profusion of crimson ribbons, to show that they bore the corpse of a murdered man, and on passing the spot where he received his death-blow the coffin was again laid down and the caoine raised.

The spirit of the corpse last buried must *fairead' 'n teampoll* (*föroo'n*

*Wm. Carleton, "The Party Fight and Funeral," in *Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry*, ii, 128, London, 1853.

†W. R. Wilde, *The Boyne and the Blackwater*, 134, 2d ed., Dublin, 1850.

‡Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Hall, *Ireland Picturesquely Illustrated*, i, 231, note, n. d., New York.

§Wm. Carleton, "The Party Fight and Funeral," in *Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry*, ii, 145, London, 1853.

chompul), "watch the cemetery," and carry water in purgatory to the souls of all the others buried there until relieved by the soul of the one next interred. On this account, should two funerals be approaching at the same time, there is a contest for priority which becomes a serious matter if they meet at the churchyard. This has frequently led to disgraceful and even bloody scenes, which have sometimes required the personal intervention of the clergy, especially in the old days of the factions. Instances have occurred even within a few years past, but their recital would serve no useful purpose.

Just outside the wall of Kilranelagh churchyard, near Baltinglass, in Wexford, is a deep round well, above which is a curved recess in the wall. In this recess are several ledges upon which are a number of wooden cups. Every one interring in the churchyard the body of a child under five years of age provides one of these cups, in which the soul of the last corpse buried carries water from the well to its predecessors in purgatory.* In Scotland there was the same struggle for precedence, but there, according to Napier, it was the duty of the one last buried to see that no suicide or unbaptized child was interred in consecrated ground.†

On entering the churchyard the procession goes three times around it on the inside following the course of the sun—a custom also observed in Scotland—while the people recite in a low voice the prayers for the dead. In some districts the coffin is then brought directly to the spot where the grave is to be dug, but in the eastern counties it is generally laid down upon a flag or a fragment from the old ruins. In making the circuit in an ancient churchyard at Slane, in Meath, the coffin is always set down for a few moments at a curious old tomb, locally known as a "pagan's grave," having two gable-shaped flagstones sunk in the earth about six feet apart, and grooved, evidently to receive the stones which once formed the roof.‡ While the coffin is resting on the flag the nearest friends dig the grave. In accordance with the usages of the Catholic church the bodies of unbaptized children, suicides and those who have died intoxicated or without fulfilling their religious obligations, are never buried in consecrated ground, but are deposited in unblest earth adjoining the north wall of the cemetery, this part being known as "the wrong side of the churchyard." In the west and south there are many small cemeteries, called *Cillín* (*Kil-yeen*), exclusively devoted to children. When a Catholic is buried in a Protestant cemetery, as sometimes happens in the north, a portion of clay is first consecrated by the priest and sprinkled over the coffin in the grave. According to Carleton, the priest in the same district would also throw the first three shovelfuls of earth upon the coffin

* Patrick Kennedy, *Legendary Fictions of the Irish Celts*, 187, London, 1866.

† James Napier, *Folk Lore or Superstitious Beliefs in the West of Scotland*, 63, Paisley, 1879.

‡ This tomb is mentioned by W. R. Wilde, *The Boyne and the Blackwater*, 182, 2d ed., Dublin, 1850; and by A. L. Lewis, *Notes on Some Irish Antiquities*, in *Jour. Anth. Inst.*, ix, 141, London, 1880.

in the name of the Trinity.* In the west, according to Lady Wilde, when the grave is dug a cross is made of two spades and the coffin is carried round it three times before being placed in the grave, after which the people kneel and recite the prayers for the dead.† The bodies of those lately buried turn over in their coffins when a suicide is deposited among them. So strong is the feeling in regard to self-destruction that in the rare instances where suicide has occurred the neighboring cemeteries have sometimes been guarded for days by parties determined to prevent the burial of the body near their departed kindred. The same watch is also kept up when there is reason to fear grave robbers. Should a pregnant woman stumble in the churchyard, the child will have crooked legs. It is also unlucky for a man to stumble at the grave, and if he should touch the clay in his fall he will die before the end of the year. Should a woman tread upon a grave she must instantly kneel down and make the sign of the cross three times upon the sole of her shoe; otherwise her next child will have a club foot.‡

In digging the grave it is customary to cross the spade and shovel above the coffin in the hole, a practice founded on the following old legend: Saint Patrick's servant had once gone a long distance from the house in search of firewood, and being delayed in consequence, was in great trouble, when he was approached by a stranger who asked him what was the matter. The servant replied that he was in trouble because he was a long way from home and could not get back in time to prepare his master's supper. "What will you give me to bring you home before he'll expect you?" asked the stranger. "I will give anything you ask," said the poor servant, and with that the stranger, who was the devil himself, took him up in the air and in a moment set him down at the door long before the saint could get home. "Now," says the devil, "come back on such a day, at a certain hour, to the spot where you met me, and I'll take *you* for myself." So when Saint Patrick returned from his prayers he found his servant crying and groaning in worse trouble than ever. "What's on you?" says the saint. "O," says the servant, "I sold myself to the devil in order to have your supper hot and warm for you when you'd be coming in, and now on such a day and at such an hour I must go back to where I met him and he'll be there to take me off with him." "Never mind," says Saint Patrick, "but do as I say." So on the day appointed the servant was at the place by daylight and dug a grave at the spot. Then he stretched himself out in the grave and crossed the spade and shovel above him. At the hour agreed upon the devil appeared and when he saw the man lying in the grave he told him to come up out of that. "Come yourself and take me," says the servant; but the devil couldn't come near the cross, and after waiting until his hour was up he had to go away without the

* William Carleton, *The Party Fight and Funeral*, in *Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry*, ii, 127, London, 1853.

† Lady Wilde, *Ancient Legends of Ireland*, i, 155, London, 1887.

‡ *Idem* ii, 104,

man. From that day to this the practice is never omitted, because the devil cannot come near the corpse which has a cross over it.

FAMILY BURIAL—SACRED CHURCHYARDS AND CHARMS.

It is the universal custom to bury all the members of a family not simply in the same ancestral cemetery, but in the same grave, the last body being put down on top of those preceding it. Of course in time the grave becomes so filled up that each new interment disturbs the bones of those buried long before, where the coffins have decayed. When the bones are thus thrown up by the spade, the smaller ones are carefully put back, while the larger ones, as the skull and thigh bones, are picked out from the heap and piled within or about the ancient church attached to the cemetery. Every old abbey ruin in Ireland is filled with piles of bleaching skulls which have accumulated in this way. Some years ago the proprietor of the estate on which are situated the ruins of Mucross abbey at Killarney had a large pit dug, in which he buried all the ghastly remains scattered about the place. The work occupied four men during five weeks, between seven and eight hundred cart loads being taken away.* Such a practice would breed contagion in almost any country but Ireland, where the constant sea breeze carries off every pestilential vapor. Strange as the custom may seem, it has its origin in the strong ties of family affection, and bids fair to live after the caccine and the wake are forgotten. In one instance, in Meath, a woman, at her own request, was buried with her parents at Clady instead of with her husband at Kilcairn, because so many of his relatives were buried in the same grave with him that "she was afraid her bones would not touch his." I have been informed by an eye-witness of a case, occurring during a fever epidemic, in which nine coffins, lying three abreast, were placed in the same grave. The same feeling actuated the Choctaws and kindred tribes, who formerly "reckoned it irreligious to mix the bones of a relation with those of a stranger, as bone of bone, and flesh of the same flesh, should be always joined together."† There is a prevalent belief that the bones thus taken up would not remain underground if reinterred. In Connemara, when one coffin is put down upon another, a small hole is always broken in the lid of the lower coffin. The reason given is that if this were not done there would soon be another death in the same family, but the original purpose was probably to leave a door through which the soul might pass in and out. This idea is also quite common in other parts of the world, and in the stone tombs of the Kassia hills, in India, the entrance slab is perforated with a round hole, apparently for the same purpose.‡ Throughout Ireland it is customary to use fragments from the old ruins in place of tombstones.

* Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Hall, *Ireland Picturesquely Illustrated*, i, 221, note, n. d., New York, R. Worthington, importer.

† James Adair, *Hist. Am. Inds.*, 184, 1775.

‡ A. W. Buckland, *Cornish and Irish Prehistoric Monuments*, *Jour. Anth. Inst.*, ix, 155, London, 1880.

The people hav a strong attachment to family cemeteries, and a horror of burial at the hands of the stranger. The sustaining hope of the poor man in his affliction, and the constant wish of the emigrant in his exile, is that he may die at home and lay his bones among his own people. The friends always try to carry out the wishes of the deceased in this regard whenever possible, even though the cemetery designated should be at a considerable distance from the place of his death. There ar several curious beliefs on this subject, and stories ar told of persons who, having died in foreign lands, wer brought home for burial by the fairies attachd to the family. Should a corpse be buried with those of another family, the souls wil quarrel—a belief which seems to hav been held also by the Indian tribes of the Gulf States*—and if the cemetery be not selected in accordance with the wishes of the deceased, the corpse wil take up its coffin and remove to another. There is also an idea, which is brought out in several old stories, that the soul of an unburied corpse must wander about and find no rest until the day of judgment.

The Kerry fishermen of Ballyheigh hav a legend of a ruind church which is sometimes visible below the waters of the bay. It marks the site of the ancient cemetery of the Cantillons, which was overwhelmd years ago by an encroachment of the sea. From that time, whenever a death occurd in the family, the body, in its coffin, was brought down to the sea-shore at night and left where the tide could reach it. In the morning it had disappear, and it was known that the fairies had taken it away for burial in the churchyard under the sea. The spel was finally broken through the curiosity of a man who attempted to watch the spirits while at work. As soon as they discoverd him they abandond the coffin and disappear forever.†

There ar several ancient cemeteries which ar regarded as peculiarly sacred, and to which the dead ar sometimes brought from long distances for interment. Chief among these ar Saint Kevin's cemetery at Glendalough, in Wicklow. It is said that owing to the prayers of the saint, any one buried here is sure to be saved at the day of judgment. Another is at the ruins of Saint Senan's church on Holy island, near the mouth of the Shannon, where, according to popular belief,

No hel wil after death torment
True Christians who ar buried in't.

It is accounted a sacrilege to disturb or pluck up any plants growing in a churchyard, and as a consequence the cemeteries ar overgrown with grass and weeds, excepting in the cities, where modern ideas ar bringing about a change. In the middle of a fertil field near Duncannon fort, in Wexford, is a small area overgrown with briers and furz, which has lain thus undisturbd for centuries, from a tradition—which seems to refer to a siege of the fort by Cromwell's forces in 1649—that here were buried

*James Adair, *Hist. Am. Inds.*, 183, 1775.

†Legends and Fairy Tales of Ireland, 282, Haverty, publisher, New York, 1882.

the dead in some ancient battle.* On the hil of Tara, in Meath, is a tall pillar stone which marks the graves of the insurgents who fell there in 1798. The grass above these "croppies' graves" is peculiar in being green upon one side of the blade and red upon the other, owing, as the people firmly believ, to its springing from the blood of the croppies.

Near Templeshambo, in Wexford, is an old cemetery concerning which a curious legend is given by Kennedy. A monstrous serpent was desolating the country, but was finally slain by a young champion, who determined to show his gratitude by building a church. He prayd for some sign to direct him where to build it, and the next day he saw two ducks flying through the air, and followd them until they came to Templeshambo. "There they lighted, the drake on the near side of the stream, and the duck on the far one. So he built a monastery on the one side and a nunnery on the other, and even when there wasn't a stick nor a stone of either of them left, there was not a woman buried on one side, nor a man on the other, till the devil bewitched the people of Ballinlugg to bury Blue Cap on the men's side.' Blue Cap was the nickname for a woman of the imported Palatine settlers. The people resented this violation of an old custom so much that they raisd the coffin at night and set it up against the church door. After two reinterments the Palatines buried her on the other side of the stream, and there she was allowd to rest.†

There ar a number of cures and charms in connection with cemeteries and the dead which merit some notice in this connection. The same importance is attachd to the relics of saints and other holy persons that is common all over Europe and the east. The most noted of these was probably the *Fiac'ail P'adruig* (*Feechal Föorig*), or tooth of Saint Patrick, which was formerly preservd at the abbey of Cong, in Mayo, and was held in great repute in the cure of various diseases. The clay from certain venerated graves, as those of Saint Patrick at Downpatrick, in Down, and of Saint Declan at Ardmore, in Waterford, is also regarded as efficacious in curing disease, and as a protection against fire and evil spirits. For this purpose it is kept in houses, and put into medicine or boild with milk and drank, and is frequently carried as a safeguard by emigrants coming to America. At the ruins of Monasterboice, in Louth, the moss from one of the old crosses is held to be a cure for the chin cough (hooping cough) when gatherd by sinless hands, for which reason a child is generally sent to procure it.‡ The dead hand—or in some cases a skeleton hand—is in Ireland, as in Britain and on the continent, considered invaluable in the cure of disease by stroking in gathering butter in the

* Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Hall, *Ireland Picturesquely Illustrated*, ii, 143, note, n. d., New York, R. Worthington, importer.

† Patrick Kennedy, *Legendary Fictions of the Irish Celts*, 246 and note 351, London 1866.

‡ Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Hall, *Ireland Picturesquely Illustrated*, ii, 419, note, n. d., New York, R. Worthington, importer.

churn and in preserving the cream from witches, and has also been used by burglars in connection with a candle as the "hand of glory." A piece of the linen sheet used in laying out the corpse wil cure a headache or swelling when tied around the affected part, while the wake candles ar esteemd for curing burns, and ar also used to singe the hair from the udder of a cow before milking her for the first time after calving. Another old belief, found also in England and Scotland, is that blood wil gush from the mouth and nose of the corpse of a murderd person when touchd by the murderer, either with his hand or with a rod. Suspected persons hav been subjected to this ordeal within recent years, and in some districts of the west it is even stil regarded as a regular legal procedure. The rod must never be cut from a holly tree, as in that case the blood would gush forth even tho the holder wer innocent. According to Lady Wilde, a seeming corpse, if not quite dead, wil utter a loud cry if touchd by the hand of the nearest relativ.* On the spot where a corpse has lain a peculiar grass known as *Feur Gortac* (*faer gurthakh*), or "hungry grass," springs up, and any one stepping upon this grass will be seizd with such a sudden feeling of weakness and hunger that he wil be unable to leav the spot without help. An oaten cake or some oatmeal carried in the pocket counteracts the evil influence. By some persons, however, a fairy origin is ascribed to this grass.

LEACHTA—THE FUTURE LIFE.

Rude stone heaps or *Leachta* (*l'yökhtha*), erected in memory of the dead, ar found in Ireland as wel as in almost every other part of the globe, this form of monument being at once the most ancient and universal, from the fact that it is the most simple in construction, while the necessary materials ar almost always at hand. The leachta ar most numerous in the extreme west and south, where they ar stil built, but ar more or les common all over the island. They ar not tombs, but simple memorials of the dead, and ar known by the names of the persons whom they commemorate. I hav been informd that in Connemara the leachta sometimes cover actual graves; but, if so, this is not in accordance with the general custom within the Christian period. They ar frequently, and perhaps usually, built in memory of some one who has met with a violent death, by murder or accident, in which case the monument is erected upon the site of the tragedy. They ar also erected by the nearest friends of the deceasd wherever the coffin is set down for a moment while on its way to the churchyard, the spot chosen being usually at the meeting of two roads. It is probable also that they ar sometimes intended to commemorate persons lost at sea, whose bodies cannot be recoverd for burial. The leacht is usually a simple heap of stones of convenient size carelessly thrown together, but in some cases the stones of the original structure ar selected and piled up with some degree of care, and brightend up from time to time with a coat of whitewash, and the whole is surmounted by a cross.

* Lady Wilde, *Ancient Legends of Ireland*, i, 154, London, 1887.

Every one passing that way throws another stone upon the heap and recites a short prayer at the same time for the soul of the deceased, but in those cases where the monument commemorates the death of a man regarded as an enemy of the people there is reason to believe that the prayer is omitted. The idea of thus inviting the prayers of the traveler for one who has met with a sudden death is in entire accord with the character of the people, who regard it as a great misfortune to die without some previous time for preparation. When a funeral procession passes one of these piles it is customary to halt and lay the coffin down for a moment, while all the people, standing with uncovered heads, recite a short prayer for the soul of the corpse, after which the coffin is again taken up and the procession moves on. The custom of building *leachta* is now perhaps extinct in the east, but existed down to a recent period. Thirty years ago there was a cross on the road between Navan and Donaghmore, in Meath, at the base of which was a large heap of stones, to which every passer-by added another. According to Kennedy, Kilranelagh churchyard east of Baltinglass, in Wexford, is situated on the crest of a hill and surrounded by a circular wall formed of loose stones. "Every man attending a funeral brings a stone picked up on its way, and throws it on the circular fence, and so the mighty ring has grown."*

From an old Kerry man was obtained the history of one of these monuments, known as Leacht-Conway, near Ballybunion, which had been built within his recollection. It is a good illustration of the manner in which such memorials originate. Conway was a tithe-server for a minister of the Church of England, and was consequently much disliked by the people, who found it hard enough to pay an exorbitant rent without giving a tenth part of their produce toward the support of a foreign church. He had been several times warned to give up the business, but paid no attention, until at last the people became restless under his exactions. He called one evening at the house of a man known to the narrator, and was told that it would not be safe for him to go home that night and urged to stay until morning. He refused to stop, and started home, but had hardly gone a mile from the house when he was waylaid and killed and his dead body was found in the road next morning. The people raised a heap of stones on the spot, and for many years every one passing that way added another stone, until the pile might make ten cart loads. Most of the stones were small, but some were as large as could well be carried. The *leacht* still remains, but the traveler seldom throws a stone upon it in these later days. When asked if every one who threw a stone offered up a prayer for the soul of Conway, the old man replied: "I'm afraid there wasn't much praying for him, because the people that prayed didn't like him, for he was an enemy to the poor."

Along the road just outside of Cong, in southern Mayo, there are several hundred of these rude monuments, the unusual number here being due to the fact that this town was formerly held in peculiar veneration on ac-

* Patrick Kennedy, *Legendary Fictions of the Irish Celts*, 187, London, 1866.

count of the presence of a celebrated monastery to which bodies were brought for burial from all parts of Ireland. Many of them are built with more than the usual care, and are thus described by observers: "Upon death occurring the primitive tumulus is built—if that may be called building which consists in placing a few large stones upon a spot previously unoccupied. Each relative of the dead adds to the heap, and in time it becomes a 'mountain' of tolerable size. Each family knows its own particular monument; and a member of, or a descendant from it, prays and leaves his offering only at that especial one. * * * In each of them we observed a small hollow, which the peasants call 'a window;' most of these were full of pebbles, and upon inquiry we learned that when one of the race to whom the deceased belongs kneels by the side of this record to his memory and offers up a prayer for the repose of his soul, it is customary to fling a little stone into this 'cupbord,' the belief being that gradually as it fills, so gradually the soul is relieved of punishment in purgatory; when completely full the soul has entered paradise."*

In regard to the future life there are a number of interesting beliefs, many of which have come down from Druidic times. It is held that the souls of those whose sins will not allow them to enter heaven at once after death are frequently condemned to spend their purgatory on this earth, generally invisibly, but sometimes in animal forms, and in this state to endure all the miseries of cold and hunger, weariness and thirst, that attach to mortal life. A white or spotted butterfly is held sacred as the embodiment of one of these spirits and is never intentionally injured. The same belief exists in China.† The spots indicate the number of sins yet to be atoned for, while the white butterfly is the purified soul on its way to paradise. For this reason a butterfly hovering about a sick-room is regarded as an omen of death, and should one alight on a corpse it is known to be the liberated soul of the dead man, and the duration of his purgatory is estimated from the number of spots on the wings of the insect. On the west coast seals are held to be the embodied souls of the dead, and their plaintive cries are wails of sorrow in their misery. They are never molested by the fishermen, who believe that swift punishment would follow any attempt to harm one. According to Hall, they are the embodied spirits of those who perished in the Deluge.‡

No one who dies in debt, or with a vow unfulfilled, or in possession of stolen property, can enter heaven until full satisfaction has been made, either by the soul in purgatory or by the friends upon earth. Stories are told of persons who have died owing small sums, and whose spirits have appeared soon after to their surviving relatives to ask them to pay the amount of the debt. Persons often vow to make a pilgrimage, or "go a

‡ Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Hall, *Ireland Picturesquely Illustrated*, iii, 376-7, New York, n. d., R. Worthington, importer.

† Chinese Superstitions, *Popular Science Monthly*, xxxii, 797, New York, April, 1888.

‡ Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Hall, *Ireland Picturesquely Illustrated*, iii, 408, n. d., New York, R. Worthington, importer.

round," to some holy place in gratitude for recovery from sickness or for some other reason, and should death prevent the performance of the engagement, some near relativ of the deceased wil undertake its fulfilment, that the soul may not suffer on account of the unredeemd promis. Stolen property, no matter how trifling in value, also blocks up the way to paradise. They tel a story in Galway of a young man who appeard to his mother soon after death and told her that the only thing that was keeping him out of heaven was "the ful of a stocking of oats" which he had stolen and desired her to return in his name. It is especially unfortunate to die without having returnd borrowd salt, as the soul wil be loaded down in purgatory with a hundred times the weight of the amount borrowd until atonement has been made. On this account salt lent to a neighbor is generally considerd as a free gift which need not be repaid, the giver saying, "I won't lend it to you, but if I run short I'l come to you for some." When it is considerd as lent, however, the loan must be repaid with a greater quantity to make sure.

The dead often mingle unseen with their former friends, watching over them and taking note of their actions. In general ghosts ar regarded with dread, but when the spirit is supposd to be that of some dear friend or of some sufferer in purgatory the feeling is one of love and pity. The lights sometimes seen at night on the surface of the ocean along the west coast ar the spirits of the dead moving about, and the howling of the blast on a stormy night is the wailing of the suffering souls wandering to and fro in search of shelter. On such nights the children ar told to go to bed and make room for them to come in, while the parents sweep the floor and arrange seats near the fire for the accommodation of the unseen visitors. On November night, or Hallow E'en, the dead all rise from their graves and revisit their former haunts, and on this night the houses ar set in order and food and water left so that the spirits can help themselvs and be merry until daylight reddens in the east. Should any one *feel* the presence of a ghost and call it by its ful name it wil be obliged to make itself visible. One must not turn round at night when he hears footsteps following him, as the sound may be caused by a ghost, whose glance would be fatal. Neither must one turn back on seeing a ghost, or try to avoid it, but go directly up to it and ask it in the name of the Trinity, "Who ar you and what do you want?" There is a long prayer known as the Passion Prayer, which releases a soul from purgatory every time it is recited on Saturday.

There is a general belief in the transmigration, not only of souls but also of bodies and inanimate objects. For this reason small articles ar sometimes buried with the corpse for its greater comfort in the other world, and the body which has been deprived of its proper adornment through the poverty or meanness of the relativs. wil suffer in the next world on account of the neglect. In Hall's Ireland is an account of a man who came into the shop of a merchant in Clonmel, in Tipperary, in order to get a suit of clothes for his father. The merchant told him that he

must bring his father with him to be measured, when the man replied that his father was dead and that he intended to wear the clothes himself. On being questioned he explained that when his father died he could not afford to dress the corpse for the grave as he wished, so he was now about to get a new suit and wear it in his father's name, and as it wore away upon himself it would go to clothe his father in the other world. On further inquiry the merchant was told by another man from the same district that this was "as true as the light."*

An intelligent gentleman from the city of Cork states that in a cabin on the outskirts of that city he once saw a corpse laid out with the feet incased in heavy hobnailed shoes. On asking the reason he was told by one of the attendants that this was done to protect the feet of the dead man when walking over the fires of purgatory.

The following story from Clare illustrates this belief in connection with fairy seizure, and is given just as it was told by a woman who knew the parties: There was a traveling woman (beggar) who used to stop at our house near Milltown-malbay whenever she was in that part of the country. She would get up in the middle of the night and come back with her eyes blackend, and say she had been with the fairies and they had beaten and battered her. There was a strong farmer near us named McMahon, and his son died and his wife sold his shoes to the servant boy. Some time after this the woman came into the neighborhood again, but she had a bad piece of news. She said she had seen the "good people" playing hurley at night and that Tom McMahon was with them, and his feet were all cut and bleeding with the stones, because he was barefoot on account of his mother selling his shoes. When the mother heard of it she was in a great way, so she went to the woman and asked her what she should do to give her son relief. The woman told her to get back the shoes again and to return the money she was paid for them, then to sprinkle them with holy water and to give them to some poor person "for the honor of God and the good of her son's soul." The mother went to the servant boy and got back the shoes and returned him the money. Then she sprinkled them with holy water and gave them to him again. Some time after the woman came to her and told her she had seen her son again with the fairies, and this time he had on his shoes.

* Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Hall, *Ireland Picturesquely Illustrated*, iii, 254, note, n. d., New York, R. Worthington, importer. • •